

## **Discipline: The Certificate of Adoption, Part 2 (Hebrews 12:7–8)**

If you will please turn to Hebrews chapter 12. Hebrews chapter 12. We'll be looking at verses 7 and 8 today to read together the entire context, beginning at verse 4. Hebrews, chapter 12.

4 You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin;

5 and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reproved by Him;

6 for those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives."

7 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?

8 But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

9 Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?

10 For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness.

11 All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

Let's pray together. Our Father, we now ask Your blessing upon our teaching and understanding of Your Word. We pray that all that is here in this passage, all of the thoughts and meditation of our hearts regarding this passage, may serve our sanctification and our edification, equipping us in the truth, helping us to think rightly about You and Your purposes for us. We pray that You would strengthen us where we are weak and encourage us. We pray that You would reprove us where we are falsely strong, where we think we are strong but we are not. Pray that You would convict us of our sin, our wrong ways of thinking, our wrong views of You and Your purposes, and

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cause our hearts to rejoice in and under the truth. We pray in Christ's name and for His sake. Amen.

There is a close connection between responsibilities and relationships. There are many responsibilities that I have and that you have, that we have only by virtue of the fact that we have a relationship with or to the people that we are responsible to in some way.

This is true in almost every area of life. As an elder in this church, I have certain responsibilities to you that are incumbent upon me, and responsibilities to the Lord as well that are incumbent upon me, by virtue of the fact that I am an elder in this church, and the other elders share the same responsibilities.

The people of this church have responsibilities to the elders of this church by virtue of the fact that you are here and you are members here, and you are under the spiritual leadership of the elders of this church.

You have responsibilities to your employer or to your employees, depending on what your relationship is to those people, responsibilities that are incumbent upon you, that you have by virtue of that relationship.

My wife has a relationship with me which places upon me responsibilities that I have to her that I do not have to any other woman in the world. Four billion other women, I do not have the responsibilities to them that I have to only one woman, because of my relationship to her. And the same is true with her responsibilities to me. I have responsibilities to my children that I owe to nobody else on the planet. And they have responsibilities incumbent upon them by virtue of their relationship to me that they owe to no other man on the planet. Four billion other men on the planet, they do not have any responsibilities to those people that they have to me, by virtue of the relationship.

It is the relationship that makes all the difference. Because I am my children's father, I have it incumbent upon me to provide for them, to protect them, to guide them, to nurture them, to meet their needs, to disciple them. They have claims on my time and my attention and my energy that no other child on the planet has. And it's because of the relationship that exists. And I would argue that the closer your relationship, the more intense the responsibilities that one has by virtue of that relationship.

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This is patently true in almost every area of life. It is so natural to us that we fulfill these responsibilities. We expect people to keep these responsibilities. We don't even think about it. I don't wake up every morning and then go, "Now remind me again: what responsibilities are incumbent upon me with my wife and with my children?" I don't have to review those every morning. The relationship is there. And so I simply function in the realm of those responsibilities, fulfilling or seeking to fulfill my responsibilities to them because of the relationship that exists.

And this is a perfect parallel that we find here in Hebrews chapter 12 with the father-son relationship that the author is making so central to this issue of discipline in the family. He is arguing that discipline is essential. It is part of our relationship with the Lord by virtue of our relationship with the Lord. It's a factor. It's a feature. It's a given. It's such a given that he makes statements that don't even need to be really explained. What son is there whom his father does not discipline? That's a rhetorical question. That is just simply to throw it out there and say, "Obviously, the relationship of the father and the son has incumbent these responsibilities in this relationship."

And so what son in the world can you imagine whom his father does not discipline? What father in his right mind would not discipline his children? It's so obvious. And that relationship and those responsibilities and that element of discipline are so much a part of our relationship with the Lord that when we experience discipline and we face suffering and the Lord trains us in righteousness, we should simply rest in and relax in the fact that this is an evidence of His love for us.

In fact, we are seeing that discipline is an evidence of two things in verses 6 through 8. It is an evidence of God's love for us. We covered that last week in verse 6: "For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives." You, as the adopted child of God, are the special object of His redeeming love and His disciplining love, the special object of that.

God does not have the same relationship with unbelievers. He doesn't discipline the children of the devil. Why? He is not interested in their moral improvement. He is not seeking to get them to share in His holiness. He is not trying to produce in them the peaceable fruits of righteousness. These are blessings that fall to us by virtue of the fact that we are His children. And since we are adopted into His family, the presence of this training, the reality of the training and the discipline, is itself an evidence of God's love for us (verse 6) and second, it is an evidence of our adoption. Discipline is the certificate

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of your adoption. You can look at God's training and say, "This is the proof that I am adopted into His family. This is the proof that He loves me."

Look at verse 7: "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. 12:7–8).

It is the proof of His love (verse 6). We covered that last week. Today we're looking at discipline as the proof of our adoption. In verses 7 and 8, notice that the author makes the case two ways: positively and then negatively. He states it from the positive side when he says in verse 7, "For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?" That's the positive side of it. If there is a son and there is a father, then the son will receive the discipline, the loving discipline of the father. That's the positive statement.

But then he states the same truth from a negative perspective in verse 8 when he says that those who are without discipline are not sons. So, positively speaking, the presence of discipline is an evidence of our sonship. Negatively speaking, the absence of such discipline and training is an evidence that we are illegitimate sons and not really genuine or true children at all. So he states it positively and then negatively.

And then there is in verse 7, in this transition, it's not really a negative case, a negative statement or a positive statement, but it's something of a transition. It's something of him introducing this argument that we have in verses 7 and 8. But in verse 7, there is here a statement, there's a little bit of a question regarding its meaning and its implications and how it should be translated. And I want to make you aware of this, because it has some import into how we view the passage itself.

The word *endure* in verse 7. Notice it. "It is for discipline that you endure." That is how the NASB renders it. "It is for discipline that you endure." That word could be taken or translated as either an indicative or as an imperative. An indicative or an imperative. Now, that sounds really complicated. It's not. By indicative, we simply mean something that indicates something. Think of it that way. It's an indicative, which means it indicates something. It's really nice when words that sort of mean the same way that they sound make the connection easily. If it is an indicative, that is simply describing something that is true of those to whom he is writing, namely, that they were enduring. So if we take it as an indicative, what he's saying is, "This is true of you." You are enduring suffering and affliction as discipline. That's how you are enduring. That's how the NASB renders it. "It

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is for discipline that you endure.” You’re enduring this and you’re enduring it as discipline. So kudos to you. This is true of you, that you are currently enduring this and you are enduring discipline.

If we understand it as an imperative, then he is not describing something that is true of them, indicating something that is true of them. Instead, he is giving them a command or a request or an exhortation, in which case he would be saying something like this: “You are to endure affliction as discipline.” It’s a command. He’s not saying that we are enduring, or the first-century readers were enduring. He’s not making a statement regarding what was true of them, but he is exhorting them or commanding them to endure suffering as discipline.

Now, I think that the argument and the flow of the author’s instruction points to this being an imperative, and this is how the NIV renders it. The NIV renders it “endure hardship as discipline.” I think that is the author’s point he is describing here, and he is giving us an imperative. He’s giving us a command as to how we are to endure discipline. And the whole flow of the context and the flow of the text, I think is best understood that way. So I’m going to say something here that you won’t hear me say very often, and that is that the NIV has a better translation at this point than the NASB. That was the first time I said that out loud. I should have practiced that. There’s a better translation of this passage at this point than the NASB, if you understand it as an imperative. Endure hardship.

Now, why would I say that it is an imperative? Look at the commands that we have back in verse 5. “You have forgotten the exhortation [the encouraging exhortation] that is addressed to you as sons.” What was that exhortation? Commands? Do not despise the discipline of the Lord. Do not despair under the discipline of the Lord. These are commands.

He says in verse 3, “Consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” A command.

Verse 1: “Run with endurance the race that is set before [you].” He’s not saying that they were enduring. In fact, their steadfastness under discipline, under persecution, is the very thing that he is concerned about. He’s not applauding them and saying, “You’re enduring well.” He is addressing a group of people who were suffering affliction, and in their minds and in their hearts, they’re thinking, “I could go back to Judaism and all of this affliction would go away.” Remember, that’s the temptation to apostatize. So he’s

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simply saying to them, “No, you must endure this hostility. You must endure the persecution, but you are to endure it as discipline.” This is the perspective.

Affliction is discipline, and that's how we are to see it. Affliction is discipline. It's training. It's training in righteousness. Your suffering is not random. We are not to endure affliction as if affliction is just something that happened to fall out on me in this life. “I don't know what happened, how the stars aligned. I don't know if I didn't get the right fortune cookie at the Chinese restaurant last week, but suddenly all of these things have come crashing down on me. And I guess this is just how the cookie crumbles. I guess this is just how it happens. It's random. It's chaos. My number came up. I guess it's my turn.” That's one way you can look at affliction, or you could view all affliction, all suffering, trials, tribulations, persecution, hostility, difficulties in this life—you could view them as, “This is God's way of training us in righteousness.” Do you see how that's two totally different perspectives? Endure discipline. Endure affliction as discipline. Look at it as discipline.

Trials are discipline, tribulations are training, and suffering is your moral formation. This is a totally different mindset.

Imagine that you had a personal trainer who showed up at your house and you've got a race to run. So you need to get in shape, and it's a year from now, and the personal trainer shows up at your house and he lays out for you a curriculum. “Hey, here's your training schedule. Seven a.m. tomorrow morning you're meeting me at the gym and we're doing this, this, and this. Here's your diet from here on out. Here's your regimen of what we have for you over the course of the next year. Here are your personal goals. Here are the benchmarks that we know that we're going to progress through this. It is time to get you in shape to run the race a year from now.”

That is exactly what discipline is in the Christian life. It is training in righteousness, so that we may run our race and that we may finish it. You wouldn't look at a personal trainer and think, “This guy is only doing this because he hates me.” You would never say that, would you? Especially if you're paying him. Then you would realize, “He's doing this because I'm paying him.” He could find somebody else to pay him to do the same thing. But you wouldn't assume that he had nefarious motives in giving you the training regimen, would you? No. You would say, “He wants me to run the race. He wants me to win. He is in this for my improvement and he knows exactly how to make that improvement. He knows what the goal is and he knows how to get me across that finish line to that goal. And so he has laid out this regimen.” And if that is the case, then I can

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trust the personal trainer. And I won't be bitter. I won't despair under it. I won't think lightly of it. I won't get discouraged by it. I'll simply know that this is the regimen that is laid out for me.

Endure affliction as discipline, as training, understanding in your mind and in your heart that this is the way that the Father is deciding to treat you, so that He may discipline you, that He may train you for the race that He has laid out before you.

Trials are not random. Affliction is not without purpose, and suffering is not without aim. And sacrifice is not without reward. It's discipline. So endure it, knowing, as he says in verse 7, that He deals with you as with sons. And this is the heart of the analogy. He deals with you as with sons.

But what if the suffering is really intense? He deals with you as with sons. He scourges every son whom He receives. So even the most arduous training, even the most severe discipline that God brings into our lives, we can understand it and view it, we can embrace it from this perspective. He deals with you as with sons.

And so if He is dealing with me as with a son, then I can know that I am His child, that my family relationship with Him as one of His precious spiritual offspring is indeed at the very heart of all of the affliction that I endure, of all of the hostility that I face. And so training and discipline should not surprise you, because this is what sons get. God is handling you as He would a son. He's not handling you as a judge handles a convicted criminal. We would deserve that, right?

But He doesn't deal with you as a judge does, those who come before Him. He doesn't deal with you as one who is His enemy. He's not dealing with you as one who is a stranger, and He's not dealing with you as a king would deal with subjects, even though, in many ways, all of those relationships are true of us. I was an alien and a stranger to the covenants and to His kingdom. I was a criminal who stood before that Judge. And now I have been pronounced "not guilty" by virtue of the fact that somebody else has taken my punishment. And I am certainly a subject in the kingdom of the great King. He is our King. But in discipline, God is not dealing with us as subjects, as criminals, as strangers, but as sons. That is a precious blessing.

And this sonship we have not by our own doing. And this is an important reminder. You didn't fall into this sonship. You weren't born into this right. This is not your birthright by virtue of the fact that you were just simply born into this world. Oh, no. And God didn't

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wake up one morning and say, “Oh, now you’re my son? Well, that's awkward. I don't know, I guess we have to deal with each other for eternity now, don't we? Because somehow you believed, you repented, and you've trusted Christ. So I guess you're a son now.” That is not His attitude at all.

You were an alien and a criminal and a stranger, and He pursued you. He chose you in Christ from before the foundation of the world and set His affections upon you. And in time He sent His Son, the perfect sacrifice for our sins, to die in our place, to bear all of the penalty for all of the wrath for all of our sin. It was all laid upon Christ, who was the perfect and full sacrifice for sin. And He who bore that sin lived a perfect life so that He could impute, or credit, to our account that perfect blameless righteousness that we needed to stand before His throne. And then, in time, after we were born, in the fullness of time when it was perfect for God to do so, He drew us to His Son. He wooed us to Christ, making Christ precious to us, opening our eyes so that we may behold the glory of God in the face of Christ, that we may understand our own sin. And then He gave us new affections, a new heart, turned us from our sins, caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and adopted us into His family, granting us full and free forgiveness for all of our transgressions. And He welcomes us in.

How much of that was your work? It's a small number, and it's not a very crooked number. It's a very round number. None of it was your work. You did none of that. So you didn't just fall into adoption. He chose you for this, pursued you for this, purchased it for you, brought you into it, caused you to be born again, and welcomed you into His family. And He does so not begrudgingly, but with wide-open arms.

Romans 8, verse 14: “For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, ‘Abba! Father!’ The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God” (Rom. 8:14–16).

We are His sons by adoption, and that is His work. Ephesians 1:5: “He predestined us to adoption.” He predestined us to it. Before the foundation of the world, before an atom or an angel was spoken into existence, He predestined you. If you are in Jesus Christ, He predestined you to adoption as sons.

Ephesians 1, verse 11 says we have also been predestined to an inheritance. “[And] we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who

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works all things after the council of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory. In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory” (Eph. 1:11–14).

That sonship that you have is sealed by the Holy Spirit, the presence of the Spirit of God in your life. And He is the pledge of the inheritance, the inheritance to which you have been predestined from before the foundation of the world.

And this is a full sonship. God embraces this not reluctantly, but gladly, welcomingly, and lovingly brings us into His family as His work. So we didn't stumble into it. This is not our idea. It's not our doing. We weren't born as such. We are made such by His doing.

And what is the proof of your adoption? What son is there whom the Father does not discipline? Your discipline is the proof that you were adopted into the family of God.

Look at verse 7. “What son is there whom his father does not discipline?” That's something of a rhetorical question. He's simply answering it as if the answer is so obvious that the relationship and role between a father and a son is such that there is no such thing as a good father, a benevolent father, a kind and loving father, who does not lovingly discipline his children. We talked about this last week. A father who does not love his children enough to discipline does not love his children enough to form them for their own good. So the absence of discipline is itself an absence of love. What son is there whom his father does not discipline? The answer to that would be so generally accepted that a good father and a decent father would do this, discipline his children, that the author simply has to remind us of what is obviously patently true on the surface. A father disciplines his sons. That's it. That is so obvious. It's always motivated by love. That was the point of verse 6.

And this obligation that a father has extends to—listen—his children and nobody else's children. As much as you might want to bring discipline on the rowdy kid in the middle of the aisle at Walmart, it is not your prerogative. So if you're walking through Walmart and you see somebody disciplining a child, spanking them in the middle of the aisle at Walmart, which—who of us here has not longed for that, at some point in your life? You see that happening. You know what? That person is in a relationship to this kid and

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loves this kid enough to correct their behavior. So what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

Notice it's stated negatively in verse 8, "If you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children." Here's the same point being made, but from the other side of the aisle. It describes those who are without discipline. Those who are without discipline are without training. If you are a son, the Father is morally obligated by His responsibility and by His love to provide for you and to oversee your training and your discipline. And so the Father—speaking spiritually here, of course—the Father will correct you, He will train you, He will instruct you in righteousness, because that is His role. That is the nature of His relationship to us.

And the opposite is true, that those children who are not legitimate children, who do not belong to Him, they do not get that training. Verse 8 says, ". . . of which all have become partakers." Those who are without discipline, "of which all have become partakers." All what? All legitimate children. All His children receive discipline. So if you receive discipline from the Father, then you know this: you're His child. That's your certificate of adoption, and He loves you. This we can know for certain. And this is the birthright, this is the joy, this is the blessing that falls out to all who are legitimate children, of which all have become partakers.

Verse 8: And if you do not receive that, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Illegitimate children. The King James translates that—and you can look that up on your own. A very colorful word. You're an illegitimate child, not a true and legitimate son. So therefore, should you pity or envy those who go without discipline? You should pity them.

In the ancient world, illegitimate children were children who were sired by a man, but that man had no moral or legal obligation to that child to train them, to teach them, to pay for their education, to give them any kind of instruction. In fact, education and instruction were restricted to legitimate, legal children in the ancient world. An illegitimate child, one who was baseborn with spurious parentage, did not get the benefits of training or the blessing of discipline or any kind of a legal inheritance. In fact, illegitimate children, even if they knew who their father was, and they could prove who their father was, and even if everybody in the village understood who their father was, they had no legal claim whatsoever upon the inheritance that would come down to the legal or legitimate children.

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And so, here is the point. Nobody escapes discipline and receives the inheritance. Listen to that. Nobody escapes discipline and receives the inheritance. Nobody receives the inheritance without being disciplined, because discipline is a blessing only reserved for those who are legitimate children. And this is the picture. Those who are baseborn and spurious are without this discipline.

Probably every one of us who is here today had that friend in school, or a friend in your neighborhood, whose parents were a lot less strict than yours, right? You remember that person? And you used to talk to them all the time, that classmate, that very good friend. And their parents would just wink at every indiscretion. You knew that you did something, and the two of you together got in trouble. And word went out to both sets of parents that this was happening. And you always knew, "When I get home, I've got adults standing in line to beat my hind end. And he's going to go home, and he can lay out the evidence, the proof of his crimes against humanity, to his parents. And his parents are just going to wink at it and say, "Kids will be kids. Yeah, you're just a kid. You'll grow out of it.'"

Or you come home with one C on your report card, and you understand this means no privileges, no Xbox. Back then, it was Atari. No Atari. No Froot Loops for breakfast. "It's oatmeal for the next month until I get that grade up." You knew that there were going to be consequences if you got one C on your report card. And yet your buddy can have a list of Ds, D-minuses, and an F. And you're like, "What are your parents going to do?" And you know that he's going to say, "They don't care. They're not going to do anything." They never had issues with his grades. They never stuck their nose into his friends choice, where he was at night. Everybody had that friend who stayed out as late as he wanted.

"What's your curfew?"

"My parents don't care when I come home."

"What? You're fourteen. How can your parents not care when you come home?"

"Yeah, they don't care."

Every person who had a friend like that envied that friend, right? But were they worthy of your envy or your pity? Your pity. Homer Kent says this: "There comes a time when the wisdom of a disciplined life is clearly apparent, and the folly of an unchastened childhood becomes tragically obvious." You pity them because, eventually, that lack of

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discipline, that lack of love, the lack of boundaries, the lack of fences in his life, the lack of care and concern, really evidences the lack of love for that child.

Now, I want you to be careful that we don't misapply this truth. Because when we say that all who are children will endure affliction as discipline, and affliction and training and righteousness will not come to the illegitimate child, I don't want us to draw the wrong conclusion and think to ourselves that if, at the moment, we do not happen to be going through any kind of affliction or suffering or difficulty or trial, that that is necessarily evidence that the Father has abandoned you, that you have lost your salvation, or that you're not a genuine son. Because that would be the temptation, right?

As I stand before you this morning, I cannot describe my life as anything but good. I don't say that to boast. I just happen to be in a season of life right now where I am not enduring any kind of physical affliction. It's not painful for me to stand here. I have no debilitating physical infirmity. I have no illness right now, that I know of, that is threatening my life or that is going to debilitate me in any way. I could have a stroke before the end of the sermon. That's always possible. But right now I know of no affliction that I am enduring. I'm not under any kind of trial right now, but I do not look at that and then say, "I wonder if I'm really a child of God." Because that's not the point of this passage, and that's not the point of the analogy. The point in bringing up the illegitimate child is not to cause us to doubt when life is not painful and we aren't suffering affliction. It is to encourage us and comfort us when life is painful and we are enduring affliction. Do you understand the difference?

No father spans his child all the time, like, every day, six p.m., "You're going to get this. I don't know that you've done anything to deserve it, but it's always good to just tune you up once in a while just to make sure that everything's running the way it should run. And so you probably have done something to deserve this. So we're just going to spank you all the time."

No, I didn't spank my children every day. I didn't spank my children every week. Sometimes not even every month. But when called for, when necessary to train them in righteousness, then you discipline them. But when it's not necessary, you don't have to make their lives miserable. You don't have to afflict them when it's not necessary. And likewise with God. There are times, there are seasons in our life when we go through things that are difficult, and they are substantively painful and vexing. And then there

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are seasons of life when the rod is pulled back and we're allowed to breathe and things go well, easier. And that's the way life is.

Right now I can say that I'm not enduring any painful loss and I'm not going through any difficult afflictions. It's very possible that you're in the same situation, in which case you and I are going through this passage so that we can prepare ourselves spiritually and emotionally, because such a time will come. It will come. Something will happen to one of my kids. Something will happen to one of my grandkids. Something will happen to one of my friends. Something will happen to me. Something will happen to my wife. How do I know that? Because we live in a fallen world, and this is what happens. And the Father has appointed those things for us, so that He may train us in righteousness.

Now, illegitimate children get no training or discipline. Legitimate children get training and discipline. I want to give you one final consideration. Royal children get the best training and discipline. Royal children get the best training and discipline.

We're going to see, this summer sometime, the coronation of the royal family in England. Now, I haven't had any interest in that since roughly 1776, so I don't really follow it. But I know it's going to happen. And I know that people who are part of the royal family, when you're a child or a descendant of the royal family, unless you're an author previously known as prince, that you are going to get the best care. You're going to get the best protection, you're going to get the best security, and you're going to get the best training and education that money can buy. Why is it that children of royalty get the very best discipline, the very best instruction, and the very best training? Why is it that they get that? Because of the name that they bear, because of the status that they have, because of their family connection, and because of the fact that they are going to go out and, at some point, represent the crown and possibly, at some point, even rule in the kingdom.

So therefore, the children of royalty get the best discipline and the best instruction, and the best training, the best that money can buy. They need to study widely in statecraft and oratory, in literature and culture, history, languages, war, strategy, religions. They have the best teachers. They have the best instructors. They have to start training earlier than the rest of us. They get more intense training than the rest of us, because they have to be well-rounded in all of these disciplines. Why? Because someday they're going to rule the kingdom, and they have to be prepared for it. J. I. Packer writes this: "In this world, royal children have to undergo extra training and discipline which other children escape, in order to fit them for their high destiny. It is the same with the

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children of the King of kings. [Listen.] The clue to understanding all His dealings with them is to remember that, throughout their lives, He is training them for what awaits them and chiseling them into the image of Christ. Sometimes the chiseling process is painful and the discipline is irksome.” And why is that? Because you and I, as sons and daughters of the King of kings, we are going to rule and reign in a new heavens and a new earth, and we are going to subdue a new creation, and we're going to bear the name of that throne and that crown for all of eternity.

So He is preparing us not just for this life, but for the life to come. That's what Paul says to Timothy in 1 Timothy chapter 4: “Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come” (1 Tim. 4:7–8).

The discipline that we endure in this world is our training in righteousness. And it is not just so that we can live forty, fifty, sixty years here in this world and then have it all be for naught. He is training us for the world that is to come.

Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness, because it is profitable not just for this life, but also for the life to come. So, as children of the King of kings, we are being prepared to reign in a new creation, one with eternal joy, eternal glory, and eternal reward. So that the King of kings, now, the royal King, is training you as His child, not just for the purpose of you serving and living here for a few years, but He is doing so for your royal and eternal home, where you will occupy a royal and eternal status in a royal and eternal kingdom that will go on forever and ever.

That is the goal of your discipline. That is why we embrace it. He is dealing with you as with sons. And better yet, the royal Father is dealing with you as royalty, as royal children, because He has His eye on His destiny for you. And we can praise Him for that.

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