

Hebrews 12:5-7

Discipline is vital in the life of a child. God clearly instructs us to discipline our children. To withhold discipline is to invite disaster into a child's life. In the same type of way discipline is vital in the life of God's children. All discipline is ultimately for the benefit of the recipient.

Hebrews 12:5-11 is specifically addressed to these Jewish people who are truly saved. It admonishes them that God, who is their heavenly Father, will discipline them if they go back to a religious system that has ended and was only temporary until Jesus came as Messiah (Jeremiah 31:31-33; Galatians 3:23-25; Ephesians 2:14-15).

Verses 5 and 6 is quoting Proverbs 3:11-12. *"My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."* God has always disciplined his children.

- 5 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:**
6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.
7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children

What has been told them in the past has now become "out of thought out of mind."
 Believers need to be constantly reminded about the basics of God and our faith.
 2 Peter 1:12-13 says:

*"Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.
 Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;*

My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord

Despise - ολιγορῶω ol-ig-o-reh'-o - to care little for, regard lightly, make small account
 Chastening, discipline, is not something we should rebel or get angry about, or lightly dismiss.

"The word does not have in it the idea of punishment, but of corrective measures which will eliminate evil in the life and encourage the good."

Kenneth Wuest, Hebrews in the Greek New Testament, page 217

nor faint when thou art rebuked of him

εκλυω ek-loo'-o to relax (literally or figuratively); faint
 If you are being disciplined by God it is a serious matter. Treat it as a serious matter.

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

There are 3 steps of God's discipline.

- 1) Conviction of sin 1 John 1:9
"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
- 2) Chastisement Hebrews 12:6
"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."
 David - 2 Samuel 12:1-7; Psalm 32:1-5; Psalm 51
- 3) Casket 1 John 5:16-17
"If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death."

Sins unto death:

- a) Occult activity 1 Samuel 31:3-5; 1 Chronicles 10:13-14
- b) Sexual sin 1 Corinthians 5:5
- c) Abuse of the Lord's Table 1 Corinthians 11:26-30

Not a sin unto death

- a) Ananias and Sapphira Acts 5:1-11

Be careful about *judging* another person's circumstances. The same circumstances in a believers life can be present because of "the trial of faith," 1 Peter 1:6-7, which is not discipline because of sin.

Discipline proves that God loves us - Psalm 119:67,75

*"Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word."
"I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me."*

If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons

Chastening (discipline) is a part of every believer's (child of God) life.

IN LIGHT OF THE THREE STEPS OF DISCIPLINE IN A CHILD OF GOD'S LIFE CONSIDER JAMES 5:13-20

- 17 **Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.**
- 18 **And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.**

The illustration in verses 17-18 (These verses are a parallel to the truth in vss. 14-16 and help us to understand the teaching of these verses.)

- 1) 1 Kings 17:1; James 5:17 - Elijah prayed and rain was withheld for 3½ years.

And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word

- 2) Deut. 28:23-24; 29:22-27 - God had promised judgment on the land if Israel forsook God's covenant.

23 *And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.*

24 *The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.*

- 3) 1 Kings 8:35-36 - Solomon would later pray based on this promise

35 *When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them:*

36 *Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.*

- 4) 2 Chronicles 7:13-14 - God told Solomon how this curse could be reversed

13 *If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people;*

14 *If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*

- 5) 1 Kings 16:30,33 - King Ahab sinned more than any of his predecessors
 30 *And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him.*
- 6) 1 Kings 17:1,7; 18:5 - God disciplined the king and kingdom with drought
- 7) 1 Kings 18:37,39-40 - the people repented
 39 *And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.*
- 8) 1 Kings 18:41-42,45 - Elijah prayed and it rained again according to God's promise to Solomon.
 41 *And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.*

God had given command to Israel to not follow false gods, sinning against Him. If they disobeyed God would send a judgment of drought (no rain). God promised when the people confessed their sin, He would restore the rain to the land. James used this illustration to explain what he is teaching on a personal level. In other words, God has given His children commands to be obeyed (see steps of discipline above). If a child of God's sin is of such a grievous nature God will discipline that person with physical sickness (i.e. 1 Corinthians 11:26-30) or other means.

13 **Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.**

If circumstances in your life have brought suffering then pray, if circumstances have brought rejoicing then sing.

14 **Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:**

15 **And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.**

16 **Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.**

Vs. 14 The word sick is the Greek word *astheneia* and means to be weak either emotionally, spiritually, or physically. Most often it is used in the sense of being weak physically.

Are there to be public meetings where sick people go forward for anointing and healing?
 Are the elders of a church to visit the sick and anoint the sick person for healing?

Or, is

Is the sick person to request that the elders come and anoint him for healing?

The sick one is to call the elders to come to him. Possibly because he is so sick he can't go to them. The elders are the leaders in the church - 1 Timothy 3:1-7.

The anointing of oil is symbolic of health and well-being - Psalm 23:5; 133:2

Vs. 15 The word sick is the Greek word *kamno* and is frequently used to mean severely sick in the physical realm. Thus, this person is extremely sick, to the point of imminent death.

The result is that God answers prayer based on his promises. (1 John 5:14-15)

J.B. Mayor in his commentary on James suggests that verse 15 should read "If he has committed sins, which have given rise to the sickness."

Vs. 16 Verses 15 and 16 infer a continual pattern of sinful practice in the life of this person.

The use of healed, *iaomai* in the Greek, is most often used in a physical sense in the New Testament (at least 24 out of 28 times) and speaks here, in the context, of physical restoration. This verse seems to speak more of prevention than correction so one does not end up in the position of verses 14-15.

19
20

**Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him;
Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a
soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.**

Brethren are the subject here (children of God). They have erred from the truth and the conversion is the realization of the sinful practice, confessing of it, and the sparing of this one from physical death.

These verses amplify the previous verses on healing. The saving is from physical death (not spiritual death) and is written in the spirit of the restoration process that is dealt with in Matthew 18:15-20 and Galatians 6:1.

Sozo, "to save", used in both James 5:15 and 20 suggests that James 5:19-20 summarizes what has been written in James 5:14-18

All of these verses directly or indirectly deal with the issue of sin. The inference clearly is that the sickness is the result of a particular sin (Psalm 32 with David; 1 Corinthians 11:28-32; 1 John 5:16).

This entire process is one of God's disciplining hand to bring an unrepentant sinner back to Him. Dr. Richard Mayhue, in the book *The Healing Promise* [much of the above on James 5 comes from this book], says the following in regard to this passage: "When the condition of physical chastisement for unrepentant sin is dealt with according to James 5, the repentant Christian will be healed because there is no longer a need for physical chastisement." The healing may be instantaneous or over a period of time, the text doesn't say, but the healing will be complete.