

**Connection to Proverbs 29:1-3,12-20**

Discipline is neither fun to give or receive, but when done correctly it is evidence of a loving relationship. The author of Hebrews characterizes God's loving hand of discipline upon His children.

**Introduction/Opening**

Our world is full of oxymorons. Oxymorons are two words that appear to contradict each other when put together. For example, jumbo shrimp, original copies, fun run. There is nothing fun about a run.

Sometimes we might believe that loving discipline is oxymoronic, but this is not the case. God is our example in disciplining those that He loves. The writer of Hebrews gave us specific ways to respond to His discipline as well as reasons for His discipline that complement what we find in Proverbs 29.

**Outline**

1. Respond to God's Discipline
  - a) When we experiences discipline, we either ignore it or seek to learn from it. The author of Hebrews, in quoting Proverbs 3:11-12, commands us not to lose heart (v. 5). This phrase means not to give up or lose motivation toward the accomplishment of a goal. The goal of a Christ follower is to be more Christlike. God uses discipline to move us toward Christlikeness, and we need not lose heart or give up on this noble goal.
  - b) Wisdom tells us not to ignore God's discipline because He disciplines those that He loves (v. 6). While this can be difficult for some to grasp because of an abusive or dysfunctional background, it is a truth from God's Word. Yes, our feelings are real, but our feelings can also lie to us. If we learn that God is disciplining us out of love, we are more likely to turn toward Him and not run from Him.
  - c) We can respond in God's loving discipline by rejoicing in knowing that receiving His discipline reveals that you are one of His children. The author of Hebrews tells us that if we do not receive His discipline, we "are illegitimate children and not sons" (v. 8). Yes, discipline is hard to receive. But, it starts to get easier when we know it is done in love and applied toward His children. If, however, one is not receiving discipline from the Lord, this serves as a reflection of the fact that a relationship does not exist.

## 2. Reasons for God's Discipline

- a) God is intentional in all that He does and that includes the disciplining of His children. Verse 10 shows that His discipline is for our benefit. Sure, it may not feel beneficial at the time, but this is where one needs to trust in the goodness and character of God. He sees the bigger picture and knows the outcome of our entire lives. He is actively seeking to discipline us for our benefit so that we can be used by Him as intended.
- b) His discipline also allows us to share in His holiness (v. 10). God calls us to be holy as He is holy. He knows that we cannot get there on our own, so He disciplines us along the way because He wants to share His perfect holiness with us and allow us to rejoice in Him.
- c) His discipline also “yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness” (v. 11). True righteousness comes as a result of being in a right relationship with God. The only way that we can be in right relationship with God is through faith in His Son. His discipline shows us our need for a Savior. He shows us this truth not out of spite but rather out of love. God's discipline of His children is truly loving.

### Conclusion

We stated early on that we tend to respond to discipline in one of two ways: we either ignore it or learn from it. Which will be true of us today? If you know Jesus as Lord and Savior, and realize that God has His loving hand of discipline upon you today, don't run from Him. Instead, turn toward Him, repent of your sin, and thank Him for loving you.

If you do not know Jesus as Lord, but feel His hand of discipline upon you, please don't run from Him. Instead, turn toward Him and find the loving relationship that you desire.

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