

## Loving Discipline

Proverbs 3:11-12

Two passages today: Proverbs 3:11-12, which is quoted in Hebrews 12:3-11

- Being quoted in the New Testament (Hebrews) means *it's still really important!*

Question: Both passages show the author trying to persuade the reader that God's Fatherly discipline is a *good thing*. Why? How so?

Answer #1: Persecution (Hebrews 12:3-4)

- It takes discipline to get ready for this extremely hard test! Like an athlete in training long before the most difficult competition.

Answer #2: Adoption. (Hebrews 12:5-10, including quotation of Proverbs 3:11-12)

- God's discipline means we're *bona fide* children of God
- How it's similar to earthly fathers (12:5-9)
  - Motivated by fatherly love! (12:6)
- How it's dissimilar to earthly fathers: "seemed best to them" vs. "our good" (12:10)
  - Important for considering imperfect, foolish earthly fathers
  - "I had to *earn* my father's approval. It was never enough." But God is different.

Answer #3: Christ-likeness

- "Share his holiness" (12:10; see 1 Peter 1:15-16)
  - In other words, to become like Christ
- "Peaceful fruit of righteousness" (12:11; see James 3:17-18)

Getting practical

### Questions for Reflection and Application

1. "I don't have to be disciplined by God to be saved, so I guess it's optional and I'd rather avoid it." Is this a secret thought?
  - a. How would you respond to this? Consider our passage carefully.
2. Fatherly discipline often comes through circumstances we didn't choose (and *wouldn't* choose). Can you think of an example of this ...
  - a. ... in the life of a character in the Bible?
  - b. ... in your own spiritual life? How did you respond? What did you learn from it?
3. Discipline can also involve activity that we *did* actively choose, like an athlete training rigorously. Can you think of an example of this ...
  - a. ... in the life of a character in the Bible?
  - b. ... in your own spiritual life?