



Vestry Voices

The Church Family Newsletter

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Church of Clinton

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The Father Disciplines to Righteousness

And have you forgotten the exhortation which addresses you as sons? –

“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord,
nor lose courage when you are punished by him.

For the Lord disciplines him whom he loves,
and chastises every son whom he receives.”

Hebrews 12:5-6 (RSV)



Rev. Gary Kiontke



The key word in our passage (*Hebrews 12:5-11*) about the love of the Father has many shades of meaning. There is no one word in English that describes the most important way the perfect Father brings about righteousness in His children.

Those translations using ‘chastening’ (KJV being one) bring out the truth that part of a father’s love is to enforce consequences in response to any and all immoral behavior in his children. The Bible in Basic English (BBE, ‘Good News’) pulls no punches by translating the word as simply ‘punishment.’

The Revised Standard Version uses the word most commonly used for God’s father love: ‘discipline.’ This is discipline to correct the child to do what is right; and, the translators also chose to translate words as ‘punish’ and ‘chastise’ in close context. (The Bible is full of synonyms in close context in almost every book.)

But, discipline is also used in the sense of a father ‘training’ his children as athletes to do what is right. Most people learn best by experience, learning as they do something. So, a good father will train his children through the experiences they have while they live in his family.

Chastisement, discipline, punishment and training are all practical tools Father God uses to ‘educate’ His children to live moral lives. Education in the broadest sense is the primary meaning of the key word in our passage. Four times it is used as a noun (*paidēi'-a* in Greek). And three times it is used as a verb (*paidēu'-ō* in Greek). [Note: The seven uses of this root word in our passage

make up over one third of all the seventeen uses of this root in the New Testament and Gospels (both times in *Luke*).]

We will now go through the passage in detail to understand both the process Father God uses in forming His children into His image, and how that process flows from His character of righteousness and (above all) love.

God’s children have forgotten they must not take lightly The Lord’s discipline; and, they must not be made weak when rebuked by Him. Because whom The Lord is loving He is disciplining (training), and He is punishing every one He is receiving. All of the verbs are in the present tense. The Father is always disciplining someone in His family (church). But, most of all, never forget Father God is doing all this in His love. (*Verses 5-6*)

After the statement, you all are being patient in discipline; as sons, God is dealing with you, God’s reason for discipline is given by a rhetorical question about human fathers: Because who is a son whom a father is not disciplining? (*Verse 7*) Good fathers discipline their sons.

But, if you all are without disciplinary correcting, of which all are made to partake, then you are illegitimate and are not children. (*Verse 8*) God is always correcting His children. In Israel, all people born of concubines had no legal protection or rights. All people not undergoing His disciplinary correction are not His legitimate children, whatever they think about themselves. In His love for His children, The Father corrects them with discipline. Moreover, discipline is proof The Father has accepted people as His true children in His Son. All trained by God’s discipline have all the protection and rights of God’s covenant people.

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The Father Disciplines to Righteousness (... continued from page #1)

Two more comparisons are made between human fathers and Father God. Then indeed the fathers of our flesh were disciplining us and we were being moved to respect, so will we not much more be in subjection to The Father of spirits and we will live? Because they indeed for a few days according to their thinking disciplined; but, He for our benefit, in order to partake of His holiness. (*Verses 9-10*) Father God's correcting discipline keeps getting better. If, because we respected our human fathers we will continue to submit to The Father of all that live, we will live. And Father God disciplines for the purpose of benefitting His children to be partakers of His holiness. Jesus commanded His disciples to be perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect (*Matthew 5:48*). Perfection is humanly impossible, but all God's children who

stay under His discipline will be given to be holy as Father God is holy. (*Leviticus 11:44-45; 1 Peter 1:15-16*)

The bottom line conclusion is that all discipline, being in the present, is not thought joy but grief; but later, peaceful fruit to those who through discipline being exercised, it gives righteousness. (*Verse 11*) God's children are compared to athletes being exercised in a gymnasium. The discipline of training results in Father God's character. God's children endure discipline for what God puts before them as the result of discipline: peace and His righteousness. (See *Hebrews 12:2*) All who let Father God discipline them experience peace and are receiving His righteousness. The benefit of His discipline outweighs its cost.

Sundays in August

We will have Communion on August 1 and 15.

Here are the details on the sermon texts and themes for each of worship services on the Lord's Day:

Sunday	Readings	Theme
August 1	Obadiah	Guest preacher: Peter Anderson
August 8	TBA	Guest preacher: Dave Lang
August 15	Jeremiah 36:1-5, 21-23, 27-28; 31:31-34; Luke 22:19-20	In the new covenant God puts His Word in His people
August 22	Daniel 6:6-27; Luke 23:1-5	Jesus is The King of God's indestructible eternal Kingdom
August 29	Hosea 11:1-9; Mark 10:13-14	God has compassion on His rebellious people, remembering their childhood

I will be on vacation on August 1 and 8. Peter Anderson has agreed to lead worship and preach on August 1 and Dave Lang on August 8.

End of a Chapter

By Petros

In 1984, I became aware of God's presence and the unconditional love He has for all. I had attended a little church and saw the joy and peace of the praise leaders. When I started singing along praising God I felt His acknowledgment like warm sunshine beaming down upon my soul. At that moment God became real and I wanted to be a follower of Jesus and be obedient by His mercy. Although I witnessed and received a full measure of the love and joy of His presence, I felt strongly that I could not completely surrender all to serve with all my heart. I was troubled on paying rent when I should be a good steward and secure a mortgage. Naive and arrogant, I petitioned God to grant me a house for

my future family. After months searching, I'd given up since the listings were out of my budget. Then something prompted me to take a look at the local newspaper. There it was – a fixer-upper that I could afford! I had no idea how long it had been advertised and felt no way it was still on the market.

I was so excited that the house was still available. As I circled the house, my enthusiasm was fading. It didn't appear to have any land as the grass was so tall it hid the backyard. Passing the broken window with the rose growing into the house, I noticed part of the chimney

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End of a Chapter (... continued from page #2)

had fallen down. I tried to get a better perspective of the damage when an “angel” appeared. The woman in the adjacent house inquired if I was buying the house, which I sadly said there is no land. “Your property goes to the second fence.” I needed a garage. “The burnt three car garage goes with the house.” Yes! This was the house of my dream. God’s provision was evident when the Realtor’s husband had secured a first time home buyer loan under 10% when people were sleeping overnight at the bank doors hoping to avoid the current mortgage rate that was 20+%. I felt so guilty that it came down to who you knew and not the effort put in that determined securing a loan.

From the initial look, through the purchase and finally moving in, God’s hand of mercy and blessing was reassuring. All said and done, as I was determined to locate the other end of the electrical wire that came through the second floor ... I paused and asked God, “why would you die for my sins when after you’d answered my prayer, I was not showing the gratefulness or even thinking about the sacrifice made for me. Before I got to the top of the stairs I heard, “Like a father loves his son,” in my head without hearing through my ears. I was not a father, but I “knew” that meant nothing was too great for the beloved. I was hammered! It gets better! I “heard a way” to find the other end of the wire. I put a jumper across the exposed wire coming, I assumed, from the maze of wires in the cellar. And I was to take a meter and find the shorted wire. With everything in place, I went down in the cellar and the first wire I came to, I “knew” it was the other end of wire that I was looking for. The meter did not detect the jumper! But I “felt” this was the wire, so I dug the probes harder and the meter came to life! Out of all the wires in the cellar, I was led to the one I was seeking!

From that moment, I became a Christian as pure as my heart’s desire allowed. I wanted to lead people to Jesus’ love; and knowing my thoughts and actions did not always reflect the Christ that was God in the flesh, I quickly determined I was not doing myself any justice to call myself a Christian. I felt comfortable being a believer of Jesus. There are too many experiences that my walk has led me through to share at any one time. The written Word of God in the Holy Bible and the Holy Spirit of God’s presence continues to mold my heart and shape me. The work of angels and miracles are so awesome. However, finding the Kingdom of God that Jesus brought to earth is the home of the everlasting and the life and treasure I now seek.

So the end of the chapter is that the house God provided, that was a constant reminder to love and serve God-the-Father, has been sold. God’s grace and mercy will continue to be treasured and expanded upon. God has blessed us with a new home that we brought in 2013 when it became 250 years old. I have wanted to build a barn next to the house for

a few years now and with the money gained I am ready for the next step. In my prayer for God’s will to be done, I envisioned an old man down in the backyard proud of how the two acres of lawn was maintained, and his tools and everything was organized in the barn. But he felt alone. No one could see his accomplishment nor did anyone care. And the feeling of emptiness prevailed as someday he will leave his little paradise and it would be left alone as if he was never there. I was given a visual reminder to seek God’s presence and will; above all things. Especially a barn that I thought would be such a help to organize my life.

There have been many wonderful, supportive encounters since I started exploring the concept of building a barn. It feels like God is in control and making things happen. I’ve been wrong before, so before I get ahead of God’s will and sharing my plans with my wife. After all I did get a present from her, Happy wife ... Happy life! All kidding aside she did give me some special presents on the sale of the house, I believe in conjunction with my desire to build a small barn. I still have to sell her on the big barn concept (God willing; the Holy Spirit has a large task!). I have to relate that I’m listening better because my wife kept telling me it was not wise to purchase the family originated restaurant and grounds which was closing. I thought of it as the opportunity of a life time! But God did not intend it for my life. So I prayed that whoever brought the property would use it for the ministry, as I had intended; a place to worship God with music and dancing. I admit, I was in awe when I met the buyer and he was running a bible study out of his living room and hoped to expand his ministry. Wow!

Again, there is so much more of God’s hand on things when we seek His will by quiet time and listening. I’m trying. I close with the three presents that Linda gave me and the symbolism I give them. An old oil lantern, so I can see the path God has set forth before me, especially on the darkest of nights. A thermometer, to remind me when things get hot; cool down in the peace of God and listen. And if things cool down – don’t get ahead of God. He has the whole world in His hands. And may need a little extra time for things to come along. So I should abide in His time and be still and listen.

And the best present needs a few background stories. First, after the vision of the old man, I shared with Linda a thought I got (given?), how it would be nice to plant a small orchard of fruit trees. She agreed. Then at the church “The Life of Christ” bible study, we read how Jesus called the first four disciples to follow and He would make them fishers of men. Pastor Gary shared how he had discovered the original meaning was “... fishers of men – to live ...”. We discussed what a significance those two words meant. Not only does Jesus give us an eternal life to those who believe. Also, He

End of a Chapter (... continued from page #3)

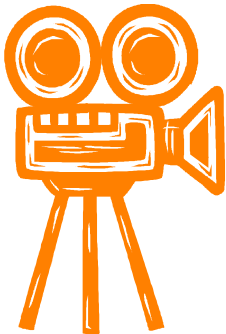
gives us a new life, like Levi – the despised tax collector, in the Kingdom of God, that he brought from heaven to earth for us. It explained to me, how the catch of fish in a lifetime could be left to follow something way better. To make a change in others so they could be raised above whatever life they had or not. Now and forever. With the Word and the Holy Spirit fruits, that others are blessed by our obedience. The empty fruit basket used to harvest fruits for our food will spoil with time. However, if we try to grow in the Holy Spirit by getting to know God and his Word through the life

of Christ, we will harvest spiritual fruits of goodness, kindness and helping others as an example of the full basket when the community comes together to share their God given fruit. It is full but you can't see it. Only by being a recipient at the Barn, based on Psalm 150. Psalm 150:1-6: Praise God in his Holy Place ... Praise him ... with trumpet sounding ... with stringed instrument and harp ... with tambourine and dancing ... with stringed and wind instruments ... with loud cymbals. Let everyone who breathes praise the LORD.

Pastor Gary's First Vacation **Friday, July 23 thru Thursday, August 12**

Pastor Gary is taking his first three weeks of vacation from July 23 to August 12. Peter Anderson led worship and preached on July 25 and will do so again on August 1. Dave Lang has agreed to cover for August 8.

Movie Night **Friday, August 27 at 7:00 PM**



We show a movie once each month, in Fellowship Hall, usually on the fourth Friday. The movies shown in the past have covered a range of genres, and were usually thought provoking.

We are able to show these movies based on the church's CVLI® license. However, this license does not allow us to advertise or publicize the names of these movies to the general public, and they are always free of charge.

We usually have free snacks available, and you are also welcome to bring your own meal, if you wish (many of us do!). So, please join us for a night out at the movies!



Photo by Marcelo Terraza from FreemImages



AUGUST 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Communion Sunday; FCC Worship - guest preacher (Note #1)	2	3	4 (††)	5	6	7
8 Guest Preacher; Coffee Hour after Worship (Note #2)	9	10	11 (††)	12 Last day of Pastor Gary's vacation Part #1 (Note #3)	13	14
15 Communion Sunday (Note #4)	16	17	18 (††)	19 (**)	20	21
22 FCC Worship; Coffee Hour after Worship (Note #5)	23	24	25 (††)	26 (**)	27 Movie Night (Note #6)	28
29 FCC Worship (Note #7)	30	31				

Calendar Notes:

- #1) 8/1 — FCC Worship with Peter Anderson: **10:27 AM. ALSO:** Communion Sunday.
- #2) 8/8 — FCC Worship with Dave Lang: **10:27 AM. ALSO:** Coffee Hour after Worship.
- #3) 8/12 — Last day of Pastor Gary's vacation Part #1.
- #4) 8/15 — Communion Sunday: **10:27 AM.**
- #5) 8/22 — FCC Worship: **10:27 AM. ALSO:** Coffee Hour after Worship
- #6) 8/27 — Movie Night — in Fellowship Hall: **7:00 PM**
- #7) 8/29 — FCC Worship: **10:27 AM.**
- (††) Wednesday Bible Study: **6:00 PM** (in Fellowship Hall).
- (**) Thursday Prayer: **3:00 PM** (in FCC Parlor) (but **ONLY** on 8/19 and 8/26).

