

Verses 7 & 9 draws on comparing the discipline of God with the discipline of a good parent.

What three verbs describe the right response of a child to the parent's discipline?

Verse 8 is the apex of our chiasm. It is characterized by the series of "not" statements.

What does it mean?

Culturally, education was invested into those who would inherit the fathers estate, no time or resources would be invested into an illegitimate child. Education/discipline therefore identified a child as one who is valued by the father.

It can be argued that suffering experience exclusively by the church has an educational or training purpose.

What about suffering that is common to humanity, can it be discipline?

The function of this passage is for us to recognise that suffering is not a sign of the absence of God, but of God's act of forming his children to inherit his kingdom.

The question is not why God allows us to suffer, but what is God teaching us now?

Close in Prayer

Pray for each other, that we would trust God in times of hardship, and grow in maturity through these experiences.



Fix Your Eyes

The Book of Hebrews Growth Group Study Guide

Week 9

7 August 2022

“Hardship as Discipline”

Hebrews 12: 1-15

Series Overview:

“Fix Your Eyes” is a study of the book of Hebrews. We don't know for sure who the author of the book is. What we do know is that this letter was written to a group of Christ-followers who were experiencing tremendous suffering and hardship. Its message is clear. In the midst of your pain, fix your eyes on Jesus who is the exact imprint of God's nature and the ultimate reflection of God's glory. This is our hope.

Read Hebrews 12:1-15

The artistry of the Hebrews writer finds a few verses that conclude one section also provide context for the next, as evident in the following chiasm.

1-2. Beware 'entanglements'

3-4 Build endurance

5-6. God loves us

7. Endure suffering

8. We are God's kids

9. Respect God's ways

10-11. God works for our good

12-14. Train hard

15. Beware 'roots' that trip

The word, 'Discipline' occurs 10 times, nearly all are in the context of a father and child, and in verse 11 discipline is described as unpleasant and painful.

What is society's attitude to this type of parental discipline?

What was your experience of parental discipline?

There has been a generational shift in societies' attitudes that now views physical discipline of children as abuse, though it is still deemed essential in other realms such as sport and military training.

In our society discipline is okay if it has a purpose.

This last section of Hebrews began in 10:19. It states that,

"we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place to God by the blood of Jesus"

Jesus purpose is to bring us into the face to face presence of God. The context of our passage is framed by verses 1 & 15

What things could hinder you from trusting Jesus? (eg. marriage failure, loss of a child, a convincing argument,)

We cannot help but look for applications for ourselves as individuals in these passages, however, note in verse 15 that the writers' concern is for the "many", the Hebrew Christian community.

What things could cause trouble in your Christian community in regards to trusting Jesus? (corrupt leadership, hypocritical behaviour, hollow doctrines,)

"Discipline" is translated from the Greek paideia (pahee-di'-ah), which can also mean: educate, train, instruct, chasten, correct, or nurture.

What is the object of discipline (v.3 & 12)?

I think of an overconfident football team that believes their talent will win them every game. Yet they are rolled over by a far less talented team.

How can this scenario happen?

They are not prepared, they haven't trained, there is no discipline.

How does verses 5 and 11 offer correction to our attitude to God's discipline?

Why does God discipline his church (v.6 & 10)?