

The Pursuit of Holiness (Part 6)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 09 March 2011

Preacher: Don Coleman

[0:00] Amen. There's a lot here, so we're going to take our time.

Hebrews chapter 12, and we are now ready to, or really have already, delved into verse 5 and following. We're going to get a little further than that.

In fact, we're going to get hopefully all the way to the end of verse 11. But now, the subject, I want to keep reminding you as we go through this study in Hebrews 12, that the subject here is holiness, and specifically, our pursuit of holiness.

That is, we might use another term, a more technical term, and that would be the word sanctification. This process that every believer is going through, becoming more and more like Jesus.

Now, there is in this process, if I might remind you, God's side to this. In fact, it's all God's work. But there's God's side, and He's going to accomplish this work in our lives.

[1:39] And then there is our side in the sense that we participate with Him. In this work of transforming us and conforming us into the life of Christ.

And so that's why we want to call it the pursuit of holiness, because this is, Paul is discussing here, our side, our responsibility in this process.

Now, in verses 1 through 4, we looked at the runner, the athlete. And we might call it the determination of the athlete, using that image. And this is what Paul did for us.

I understand there are some in here who are in Tom Holland's Sunday School class. And he, I may have mentioned, he doesn't believe that Paul wrote the book of Hebrews. Right?

You just tell Tom that Paul did write it. No, in all fairness, he said to me the other day, he said, Now, I told my class, I mentioned some very notable scholars who believe that Paul wrote the book of Hebrews.

[2:45] And I include your name in that list. So, I appreciate that. But, anyway, so, I always have to kind of, you know, qualify that.

You're going to hear me say Paul all the time. And so, we'll just dispense with it. Paul wrote the book of Hebrews, aren't you? Now, starting with verse 5 and following, we're looking at the image of the family.

Or, more specifically, the discipline of a father. And that's the kind of relationship that we have with God, our Father. And what He is doing in our lives, we can define by the word discipline.

Discipline. And so, we got into that, I think, last Wednesday. And we've already considered, actually, last several Wednesdays, we've considered the design of discipline. And just kind of by way of review, the design of God's discipline in our lives is to correct us, and to protect us, and to instruct us with the ultimate purpose of perfecting us.

And here comes into play the idea of holiness. And then we also talked about the defeat of discipline. This is what we got into last time. And we talked about how God's design of discipline can be, in a sense, defeated by His children.

[4:00] And we can do that by despising it, number one. And then, two, we can do it by despairing under it. Or fainting under it. And now, we're going to get into two additional truths about the discipline of God that I think really ought to really warm our hearts.

And so, number three, and this is where your outline begins tonight. Number three, the demonstration of discipline. The demonstration of discipline.

Now, what I mean is, Paul tells us here, very clearly, I think, in Hebrews 12, in these verses we're going to look at, Paul tells us what God's discipline is a demonstration of.

That's what I mean by the demonstration of discipline. What is it a demonstration of? Well, it's a demonstration of two wonderful things. Two wonderful truths. And let me just name them on the

front end and then we'll get into it.

They are that He loves us and two, that we are His children. Now, look at verse 6. And you'll see that very clearly. Now, he's quoting, of course, here from the Old Testament.

[5:14] For whom the Lord loves, he what? Chastens. Or disciplines. And scourges every son whom he receives.

Alright, there are those two ideas right there in that one really, well, that one verse. Verse 6. Now, it's sad to admit, though, if we'd be honest with ourselves, and we ought to be, it's sad to admit that really these two wonderful truths are often the furthest thing from our minds when we're going through affliction.

That is, the idea that God loves us and that we're one of His children usually is not in our minds, in our thoughts, during the darkest times of our hurting or problems or circumstances we may be going through.

In fact, we often find ourselves coming to the opposite conclusion, if we would be honest. And Christians can do that. Or, you know, that somehow our afflictions rather than reveal the love of God, they reveal His anger.

And we can come to that conclusion during those hard times and difficult times. And out of that, we can also entertain the notion that maybe I don't belong to God like I thought I did.

[6:40] So those are the opposite, direct opposites of what the Bible says here God's discipline is a demonstration of.

It's not that He hates us and not that we don't belong to Him. It's quite the opposite of that. Now, I know it's difficult to see that, especially when you're in the midst of whatever the trouble may be. And so we must look at it with the eyes of faith. We'll get into that as we go along. When I was a little boy, I don't remember very much about my childhood. In fact, I remember very little about last week.

But, you know, my wife, she can name, I mean, just everything she did and even what she wore when she was two years old. You know, she just can do that. I can never do that. But when I was a kid, I do remember one time that I decided I was going to run away from home because I was convinced that my mom and dad didn't love me.

Let me just have a show of hands. Anybody in here ever run away from home? All right. So I'm not the only one. So I don't want to have to feel like you're appalled that you're a pastor or whatever.

[7:52] Admit that, for one thing. But I was convinced. I was going to run away from home. And I did run away from home. I did. I got all the way to the front porch. And my dad found me out there crying on the front porch as far as I got.

But I didn't remember. I was convinced that mom and dad didn't love me. And I don't remember the substance. I don't remember what happened to make me come to that conclusion. I'm just convinced of it. So I'm just going to run away from home. But you see, a part of our responding correctly, we need to understand this, part of our responding correctly to the discipline of God, no matter what form it takes.

We've already talked about that. The discipline is designed to do this or this or this or this. It's not always to punish us, sometimes to perfect us and so forth. So our correct response to the discipline of God is to rejoice in what it demonstrates to us.

I'm convinced that most of us, myself included, typically do not look at our... I don't look at my afflictions in that light.

That it's demonstrating something to me about a loving God. But it does. And so what does it demonstrate? Here are the two things that I think are clear in the text.

[9:17] A. Not one, but A. It is corresponding to your outline. Discipline demonstrates then that God loves us. It demonstrates that.

You say, what a crazy way to do that, God. But it's exactly what it does. It demonstrates that He loves us. That's what Paul's saying here. In effect, everything, and I would underscore everything that happens to us is bound up in that love and is for our good.

Every single thing. I know. It's one thing to say that. In fact, you might be sitting there thinking, you know, you're right, Brother Doug. But when it comes to where the tire hits the road, rubber meets the road, you know.

When we're in the midst of it, we have a hard time thinking of it in those terms. But it's true.

Everything. Even those afflictions we suffer because, you know, or they come because of our own

making.

We rebel or sin. Even those things, and especially those things, are meant by God for our good. And whatever other design, He has. Everything.

[10 : 38] So I would, again, underscore that. Everything that happens to us is bound up in that love that He has for us and, therefore, it is for our good.

It's for our good. Verse 6. For whom the Lord loves, He chastens. He disciplines. Do you believe that?

Amen. Well, I hope you do. Sometimes we don't believe it or we lose sight of it. Did you know that if you're a born-again believer here tonight, that God chose you before anything was even created? He chose you to be His child. That's what the Bible says. Ephesians 1.4 The Bible suggests that He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy without blame before Him in love.

Now, my point here is not to delve into the theology of sovereign election. Unconditional election.

[11 : 55] The point is here that God chose you before anything was created because He loved you. He loved you. Did you also know that salvation is a demonstration of God's love?

Well, you do know that, don't you? John 3.16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

It's a demonstration of His love. Did you also know that Jesus died on the cross as a demonstration of God's love? A supreme demonstration of His love. Romans 5.8 God demonstrates His own love toward us and that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

Christ died for us. Did you know that all of these wonderful things I've just mentioned are demonstrations of God's love? You didn't know before you do now. You also know something else now.

That the discipline of God is also a demonstration of His love. Whatever form that discipline takes. Alright? For whom the Lord loves He chastens.

[13 : 11] Now, someone might be thinking well, Brother Don, other than it being right here in plain English right here in the Bible how do I know that my afflictions and my problems and so forth are telling me that God loves me?

How do I know that? Well, you know it by faith. You know it by faith. See, faith is always the key to understanding or responding rather to God in the right way in every situation.

Isn't that right? Faith is the key to that. Faith tells me that God allows me to suffer, to be afflicted, to have problems, to go through times of hardship.

that faith tells me that God allows these things in my life because He loves me. Now, this is hard to swallow, but it's true.

Now, it's not a blind faith. It's a reasonable faith. In fact, it's a faith in the facts. So next time you have one of those seasons of life, you know, whatever it may be, times of affliction, just ask and answer the following series of questions.

[14 : 34] And I have these questions there for you. Number one, ask, am I a true child of God? Now, you ought to be able to answer that one real quickly.

Some might even have the mistaken notion, I shouldn't even ask myself that question. And maybe you don't need to ask yourself that question. Maybe it's that quick that's not the question. That is the beginning point.

Am I a true child of God? John 1.12 says, but as many as received him and as received Jesus, to them gave he power or the right to become children of God.

Children of God even to them that believe or trust in his name. And so you begin there. Am I a true child of God? Number two, does God love me, or God the Father, love me always?

That's a simple question, isn't it? Ask yourself, does God love me always? What's the answer to that question?

[15 : 43] Yes. It's yes. I love Jeremiah 31.3, one of my favorite verses out of Jeremiah. The Lord said, the Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love.

Therefore, with loving kindness have I drawn thee. I just love that verse. I just ask you, you know, how long would you say is everlasting?

How long is that? Forever, unending. And it's forever on both ends. Everlasting love.

Now, if God loves you and you know it, say amen. Okay. Very good. Now, I'm not asking you to respond that way according to how you feel right now.

let's make sure we keep this in the right kind of perspective or qualify this in the right way when I'm talking about feeling necessarily because, listen, you may not feel that right now.

[16:58] I mean, in this room, even though this is a small group, there's a percentage of us in this room that are going through maybe some horrendous things in your life.

maybe others, maybe you wouldn't define it as horrendous, but there's some real difficulty in my life. And there are times then when you're in the midst of that storm that you don't feel God's love for you.

I'm not asking you to respond that way according to the way you feel. I'm asking what your faith tells you. what does your faith tell you?

It's faith in His Word. See, this is a very logical thing. Now, number three, and you're going to need to write this one in. I know you have a number three there, but I missed one.

There are actually, I think, four questions you need to ask yourself. just write this one in there somewhere between number three and four, okay? Or two and four. 2A, or A2.

[18:09] Here's a third one. Does God possess absolute power over all things? What's the answer to that question?

Yes. Absolutely. Absolutely, He has absolute power. You might word it, is He sovereign over all things, all things, including all the things in your life, including the things that are happening in your life.

Does He possess absolute power over all things? And the answer to that question is yes. You see, the logic here, am I a true child of God? Yes, I am.

I belong to Him. Does He love me? Always. Yes. Why? Because I feel that way? No, because my faith says that.

My faith is grounded in what God's Word is. Is God all powerful over all things? Absolutely. And then comes the fourth question, which is number three on your list, but here's number four.

[19:18] Is God bound by His love for me to do only those things and to allow only those things in my life that will be for my good?

The answer is yes, of course. It's yes. Do you know any scriptures that might help you with the answer to that question? If you're questioning whether that's yes or not.

How about Romans 8.28? Romans 8.28 says, and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose.

Now, Paul goes on to tell us what that ultimate purpose is. That leads all the way to glory. Our glorification, but let me ask you, what things are included in all things?

well, let's make it easier. Name one thing that is not included. That's sometimes easier to answer, you know.

[20:34] Well, I can't bear it, just think of all these things. Name something that isn't included. Well, there isn't anything that's not included. All things means all things. So, you see, this is so logical, and we need to work this through in our minds, and I'm not trying to make this over simplified, but it really isn't that complicated for a child of God.

And we all just ask these things, you know, just kind of run this through our minds over and over again. Am I a true child of God? Yes. Does God love me all the time? Yes.

Is God all-powerful over everything that might come into my life? Yes. Is God bound by His love for me only to allow those things that are for my good?

Yes. I don't mean that God is somehow bound, He's self-bound by His love for us. So, then faith tells me whatever I receive in my life as a believer comes from a loving God.

Now, again, let's just admit the reality, sometimes we can't see that. We can't see it. Now, we need to be reminded of it here, but sometimes we can't see it.

[21:50] Kind of like someone asked a man why he was looking over a wall. He said, well, because he can't see through it. And so, we need to look over our afflictions and over into the face of a loving God who designs and desires everything to come into our lives for our ultimate good.

And of course, our ultimate good is in perfect sync with his purpose and force as well. There's something else the discipline of God demonstrates, and that is, B, discipline demonstrates that you are one of his children.

I'm not getting things out of order here. This is just the way it falls here in the text. We've already established the fact that I'm a child of God.

I belong to him through faith in his son. the discipline of God we need to understand that it demonstrates these two wonderful truths that he loves us and that we belong to him.

We're one of his children. Verses 6. We'll just kind of follow it along and see how many times the Bible or the idea of son or sons is presented here.

[23:14] Now, he's not trying to be just masculine exclusive here. We're all children. We think of it in those terms. In fact, in verse 5, he says, my son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord.

Verse 6, for whom the Lord loves, he chastens the scriptures. Every son whom he receives. if you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons.

For what son is there whom a father does not chasten? See, how many times that is repeated over and over in the text. It's very explicit that this whole process or this whole design of God to discipline us, to make us more holy, is something he does for his children.

And it demonstrates that we are his children. Okay? Number one, only God's children are subject to his loving discipline.

That's what we understand from the text. Have you ever had a desire to discipline someone else's child? Boy, I stuck a cord there, you know, you observe someone else's child throwing a fit or being extremely disobedient or defiant or whatever, even violent.

[24:46] Sometimes I've seen that and you've witnessed that too. And I thought to myself, just give me that kid for ten minutes and I'm taking care of this. And I felt that way numerous times.

I've told this story, so many times I've probably told it in here, but just prime example I will never forget. It was after church one day. And I'd been the pastor at this church over there in Arkansas for a little while, and so everybody knew me, knew my wife, knew our approach to parenthood.

Anyway, we're out in the parking lot, and this lady in our church, her little boy, I mean, he could have been this tall, was just absolutely throwing a fit.

I mean, just a fit and screaming and stomping and all those kind of things. And all because he wanted to get in the car with her sister, his mother's sister, his aunt.

They were all going to the same place, but he wanted to ride with her and not with his mama, and his mama said, you're going to ride in my car, and he was throwing a royal fit. And not just loud and yelling and stomping, but even slapping at his mama.

[26:06] And I'm standing there observing all this. And she is just absolutely to the end, her wit's end.

What's she going to do? And she's embarrassed, and she looks up at me and says, Brother Dom, what would you do? And even before I could respond, she said, I know what you would do.

And that was it. And she was probably right what I would do, but you know, after she finally wrestled that kid and got him into the car where she said he was to ride in the first place, and they drove off, you know, my desire to discipline that child was completely vanished after that.

I didn't have any continuing desire to discipline that child. And why? Not my kid. Not mine. So I don't have an ongoing desire to correct and to discipline and to shape and mold somebody else's child. And I think as members of the church, we have opportunities to support and help families do that, parents do that, but in a sense we don't have this deep ongoing desire to do that because they're not our children.

[27:28] There's not a person on the face of the earth that is not subject to the correction of God and the sovereignty of God, but only God's children are subject to His loving discipline.

And when that happens, it is a demonstration to us that we do belong to Him. He scourges every son whom He receives.

God deals with you as with sons or children. Let's just insert children there. What child or son or daughter is he or she whom the father chastens not?

And the answer is there aren't any because we belong to Him. And it's such a demonstration.

Secondly, the absence of God's discipline proves illegitimacy.

That's what God's Word says here. I mean, what Paul says is pretty frightening, really, verse 8. But if you are without chastening of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

[28:42] Not sons. see how it demonstrates who we really are to God. Have you ever found yourself envying the life of a lost person? The life of an unbeliever?

Don't look at me so pious and holy. I mean, you know, you talk about just some unbelievers, it just seems to us, just by our observation, some unbelievers seem to have everything going for them.

Sometimes. It seems that way, doesn't it? And, you know, they can just live their life of sin and disobedience and unbelief and seemingly suffer no consequences.

It's true. It seems that way, doesn't it? They don't love God, they don't love His church, they don't care anything about the Bible. In fact, some of them might be hostile toward all those things.

and yet, you know, they can break God's law and seem to get away with it and just live any way they want to. You ever envied a person like that?

[29 : 48] It's interesting the different reactions I see on people's faces, you know. Yes, but I sure don't want you to admit it. You know, in a sense, have you ever questioned God by asking what Jeremiah asked?

in Jeremiah 12.1. Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why are those happy who deal so treacherously?

I had a believer ask me today, or say something like this to me today, this very day, say, you know, it just seems like unbelievers have an easier way to live.

It's harder to be a Christian. They haven't gotten home yet. Yeah, well, that's right. Now, the truth of the matter is, and this is where our faith kicks in, we understand the truth here, that we would really rather be the true sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father and take whatever His loving and sovereign hand gives to us, than to be an illegitimate child and not know the love of God and discipline of God.

That's the truth of the matter. Number three, God's discipline will not destroy us. I heard a good friend of mine, preacher, a friend of mine years ago, he kind of likened this to, sometimes on TV, I don't see it so much anymore, but sometimes you have these kind of tests, the emergency broadcast, you know, and they come on and say, this is just a test.

[31 : 36] If this were a real danger or whatever, you know, you'd be, and so it's always that kind of thing, and he said that the things that happen in our lives, kind of like God said, this is just a test.

If this was meant to destroy you, you would know it. Yeah, you wouldn't know it. You couldn't do anything about it anyway. But, God's discipline will not destroy you.

And we need to remember that. Proverbs 23, 13, and 14, withhold not correction from the child, for if you beat him with the rod, well, that is as politically incorrect as possible.

If you beat him with the rod, he will not die. Thou shalt beat him with a rod and shall deliver his soul from hell. Well, God, see, that's what God, we need to understand God's discipline toward us as well.

Not only learn the lesson that we can glean from that as parents of children as well and how we ought to treat them. Number four, God's discipline produces respect and submission.

[32 : 57] Respect and submission. You know, there's something about the discipline of a parent. That is, when it's done, in love and not in anger, there's something about the discipline of a parent that not only assures the child that he is loved or she is loved, but it also produces in the child a healthy respect for its parents.

That's what he says in verse 9. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us and we paid them respect. See, the two go together.

They disciplined us and the responsible is respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits, to God, and live?

See, it produces respect and submission. Have you ever heard a grown man get all prideful about the way his father used to be? I'm serious.

Have you ever heard that? I've talked to so many men over the years and they say, well, how did my dad have to you? He used to wear me out. And they get all kind of puffed up with pride about it.

[34 : 18] And why is that? Because they respect it. I'm not talking about beating and child abuse, although the definition of that has kind of changed over the years.

But they kind of get all prideful about it. They respect their daddies. And this is Paul's point here. How much more, Paul says, with the spirit, the father of spirits to God.

Number five, God's discipline is instructive for earthly parents. I think there's a lesson to learn here for the 21st century parent.

Earthly fathers and mothers. I mean, we're living in a day, I think we all would admit it, we're living in a day where physical discipline, and I'm talking about just good old-fashioned spanking.

Yeah, this is going to be on the web, on the internet. Somebody will say that pastor down there is advocating child abuse. We're living in a day when that kind of discipline and other forms of

discipline are really defined as harsh and unloving.

[35:36] Maybe showing a lack of love. Even child abuse, that's the kind of world we're living in today, where discipline in the home and other very key places, school, church, other places, where discipline there is becoming a thing of the past.

And in many cases it's becoming illegal altogether. And consequently, you know, I have witnessed a three foot thirty pound child literally ruling his own.

And my heart goes out to parents. I feel sorry for them. These parents that are in such bondage to their own children.

It shouldn't be that way. A little bondage where there is no freedom. Not at home, not at church, not anywhere, where many parents are not even able to serve the Lord and His church because of their children.

Undisciplined kids are undisciplined. Proverbs 29.15 says a child left to himself, that is, we see this every day, a child that gets his own way, brings his mother to shame.

[36:58] Now, it's not just speaking in the ultimate sense that that child will grow up to be a rebel and all of the things that might happen as a result of that, but I think the shame comes even while the child is young and others observe a child that is incorrigible.

It's a shame and how sad that is. There's something even sadder than that, than the shame that comes to parents who do not discipline their children.

There is also taught in Scripture that this reveals the absence of real genuine love. But the absence of discipline in the home reveals an absence of genuine love for the child.

And a child senses that. Senses that. The Bible says in Proverbs 13.24 He that spares his rod hates his son.

That's pretty blunt. Pretty straightforward. I don't know how else you deal with that, but to take it just literally. You spare discipline. If you do not discipline your children, you hate them.

[38:16] You hate your children. You hate them. But he that loves him chastens him diligently. Diligently. I read a story yesterday and I'll read it to you.

About a little boy, a little two-year boy who was having an attack of stubbornness. His mother had asked him to do something, but he was much too busy with more important things.

Now, the father watched as the mother came near the child to remind him that he was to mind his mother and to do what she said and to do it promptly, to which the boy responded with a right hook to his mother's jaw.

Well, the father immediately took action and gave this would-be boxer the worst spanking of his young life and sent him to his room. Ten minutes later, the little boy came up out to his father, climbed up on his lap, and with his fat, chubby little arms around his daddy's neck.

He said, I love you, daddy. Now, if you've never experienced that as a parent, then perhaps you need to examine the kind of loving discipline you're using with your children.

[39:32] See? Dads, especially, need to take the time to love their kids enough to discipline. moms, too.

Sometimes it's just the mom. At the same time, moms shouldn't say, you just wait until your dad gets home. That kind of thing. But, you know, we need to love our kids enough to train them and to discipline them with the rod of correction where that's needed, where that's appropriate.

And sometimes it may have to be severe, this kind of discipline. I know this is shocking to some in our culture.

Sometimes the discipline has to hurt. I mean physically hurt. The word scourges here in the text, in verse 6, refers to a severe whipping.

That's what the word means. And we can try to allegorize it and kind of explain it away and soften it and kind of culturize it. It's not a word. But it means what it means.

[40:42] It means a severe whipping. In fact, in the old English it was called a flogging. A flogging. Can you imagine that in relation to parental discipline of a child?

Now, obviously he's talking about God and his discipline of his children and God doesn't come down here physically and take a stick and whip us. But in fact, sometimes I wish he would do that rather than.

Because it might be easier to take just a good old beating. Some of the things we endure seem much more severe. But they're meant for our good. And so sometimes it's going to hurt and has to hurt.

And the discipline must be severe in order to match the disobedience. But God's discipline is always right, always appropriate, always perfect.

Now, a parent may blow it, and sometimes we may discipline in anger. And we shouldn't do that. But God is not disciplining us according to his anger.

[41:50] It's always appropriate, always perfect, always accomplishes his will, always accomplishes things for our profit. and that then leads to one final truth about discipline.

Discipline of God the Father is a good thing because we're about out of time. That is the determination of discipline. The determination. Look at verse 10, 10 and 11.

For they indeed, speaking of our earthly fathers, earthly parents, they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them. But he for our profit, that, and here's what he's determined to accomplish here, that we may be partakers of his holiness.

Now, no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful. Nevertheless, afterward, it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

I like the old King James, exercised by it. It just has a bigger punch to it. The thing that my daddy exercised me sometimes, you understand?

[43:06] Now, here I am, all puffed up with pride about it. Now, our loving Father, Heavenly Father, is determined to accomplish holiness in his children.

He's determined to do that by whatever means it takes. And sometimes they're severe. When I say holiness, I mean not doing certain sinful activities, but more than that, holiness also means doing certain righteous things.

Peaceable fruit of righteousness. But it's even more than that. Holiness is becoming more and more and more separated from all that is sinful.

and more becoming more and more and more dedicated to and committed to Christ. That's what it is.

And it's a lifelong process. And God is the one who is accomplishing it in our lives and this work of holiness or again, we use the word sanctification, is accomplished partly as we respond to the discipline of God in our lives.

[44:17] no matter what its purpose, to correct, to protect, or instruct. So that, as Paul put it in Ephesians 3.19, that we might be filled with all the fullness of God.

That's his purpose. And so what do we say to that? Well, someone has written, I say, let the rains of disappointment come if they water the plants of spiritual grace.

Let the winds of adversity blow if they serve to root more securely the trees that God has planted were his trees. I say, let the sun of prosperity be eclipsed if that brings me closer to the true light of life.

Welcome, sweet discipline. Can you find yourself saying that? Welcome, sweet discipline.

Discipline designed for my joy. Discipline designed to make me what God wants me to be.

Thank you.