

Hebrews 12:5-11; "The Chastening Hand of God" June 1, 2025

I. Welcome & Review

A. Good morning. "Ohayougozaimasu". Welcome to Calvary Chapel Iwakuni. It's great to be here with you all as we gather together to worship our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

1. *Welcome any new faces and those streaming online.*

B. Before we dismiss our children to their Sunday School class, we want to take just a few minutes to pray for our brother Caleb.

1. Caleb's time here in Iwakuni is coming to a close and we want to pray for him and God's continued work in him.

2. Caleb came to faith while stationed here in Iwakuni and God has been working in and through Him, revealing Himself to him, and stirring a hunger within him for the Lord.

3. Caleb is going to be separating from the military and is headed back to his hometown in Utah where he hopes to pursue a career as a nurse.

4. Lets pray for our brother and thank God for our time with him. (*Pray*)

C. As people head back to their seats, let's go ahead and dismiss our elementary aged children to their Sunday School classrooms.

1. (*2nd Service; Remember to dismiss the Bible English class.*)

D. For the rest of us, we will continue through our study of the book of Hebrews. Today, is also the first Sunday of the month, and as such we will be taking some time at the end of our service to come to the Lord's Table as is our normal practice here at Calvary.

E. Last week, we started off chapter 12 of our study through the book of Hebrews, but we didn't get very far into the chapter, only the first four verses.

1. We looked at the author's exhortation to run with endurance. And we noted a few things about that charge to run with endurance and what is involved with it.

a. We noted how running the race with endurance involves learning from those who have gone before us.

b. It involves loosening ourselves from weights and sins that ensnare us and slow us down.

c. Running with endurance also involves lasting through all the challenges and circumstances God has placed in our own individual races.

d. And lastly we noted how running with endurance involves looking to Jesus. We look to Him because He is the author and finisher of our faith, because He is the perfect example of endurance, and we look to Jesus because our race is not yet finished. So we need to keep our eyes on Him as we push toward the finish line of our race.

2. This week, we will continue in our study of the book of Hebrews, but we will shift gears a little. The author is going to talk about something that most people really don't enjoy talking about.

3. The author is going to bring up the topic of chastening, of discipline, of correction. These are things that most people don't want to have any part of. Most people don't like discipline, they don't like chastening.

4. But as we'll see in our text today, it is an important part of our walk and relationship with the Lord.

5. Our text this morning is going to be Hebrews 12 verses 5-11 and the title of our study is going to be "**The Chastening Hand of the Lord**".

6. If you haven't done so already, go ahead and open up your Bibles and make your way to Hebrews chapter 12. And then once you are there, I'd like to invite you to rise to your feet if you are able, in honor of the Lord and His Word.

7. I'm going to read through the entirety of our text this morning from my Bible. As is my preference, I'll be reading from the NKJV of the Bible, if you are reading from a different translation just do your best to follow along in your Bible, as I read from mine.

8. The author of Hebrews continues his exhortation to the first century church and us as well, with the following in verse 5... (R & P)

II. Intro

A. Now, a very simple reading of our text lets us know that we are going to be dealing with the topic of chastening this morning.

1. The Greek root word for chastening is found eight times in the seven verses that make up our text today. So obviously the author is wanting to make some significant points about chastening.

B. Now, when we think of the word chastening, most of us probably think of one of two things depending upon where you are at in life.

1. You either think of the chastening you received as a child, or if you have children, perhaps you think of the chastening that you have to do when it comes to your own children. Some of you maybe think of both, especially if you were one who experienced a good amount of chastening throughout your life.

2. Don't worry, I'm not going to call for a show of hands.

3. The idea of chastening being associated with children and child rearing is appropriate. The Greek root word that is used 8 times in our text is the root word for that is used for the Greek word child as well.

4. When we think about chastening as it pertains to children, we probably think of different forms of discipline that we've either received or delivered either as a child or a parent.

5. I don't know about you and your upbringing, but when I think about the chastening I received as a child, it usually involved a good ol' fashioned whopping on my behind.

6. I know that a lot of the culture of this day is much different than what it was when I was growing up as a kid some 40 years ago, but hopefully you all know and understand the concept of chastening.
- C. Chastening involves discipline and correction, reprimanding and potential punishment, or at least consequences for certain actions and behaviors. The goal behind chastening is to stop certain behaviors and encourage the improvement of behavior.
1. But what you may not understand is that this Greek word used for chastening, carries with it other ideas as well.
 - a. In Titus 2 it is translated as “teaching”
 - b. In Acts 7 and 1 Timothy 1 it is translated as “learn”
 - c. In Ephesians 6 it is translated as “training”
 - d. And in 2 Timothy it is translated as “instruction”
 2. And as we consider the topic of chastening in our study today, we need to understand chastening from this context. It involves much more than mere discipline or correction, it also involves teaching and instruction as well. When God chastens us it can be for any of these reasons; whether to discipline or correct us, or to teach or instruct us.
- D. Now, before we start to dive into our text, I do want to give a disclaimer of sorts, so as not to cause any confusion and to avoid people making inaccurate assessments of situations or drawing the wrong conclusion.
1. The bible is clear that God disciplines us. God doesn’t want His children to sin, and when we do engage in sinful activity, when we disobey God, He will often times bring discipline our way.
 - a. That discipline could take shape any number of different ways, it can come through hardship and pain, it can come through loss and heartache, it can come through turmoil and circumstances.
 - b. God doesn’t discipline us as a way to grind us down, but to grow us up. God’s discipline is all about correction, not condemnation. And we will all inevitably experience the chastening hand of God as we learn to walk with the Lord.
 2. But, not every hardship we face, or turmoil, or challenge we encounter is a direct result of God disciplining us. I want to make that crystal clear from the get go.
 3. Though we will be talking about the chastening hand of God, and how that can come as a result of sin or disobedience in someone’s life, it does not mean that any and all chastening is a direct result of sin.
 - a. Just because someone is going through a difficulty in life, or they are experiencing challenges, or perhaps setbacks and obstacles, does not mean that they are in sin or disobeying God, or that God must be chastening them, or that God is showing His disapproval of their life.
 - b. You can’t look at someone going through a tough circumstance and just assume that the reason they’re going through that is because of sin or because God is showing His disapproval of someone.
 4. People can find themselves in challenging and tough circumstances as a result of obedience to God.
 - a. Jesus told His disciples to get into a boat and cross over to the other side. In fact, the Scriptures say that Jesus made them get in the boat and to go before Him to the other side (**Mt. 14:22**)
 - b. And as they went, they found themselves in the midst of a huge storm. They were in that storm because they were obedient to do exactly as Jesus instructed them.
 5. So, you can’t just assume that since someone is experiencing what may look like chastening, or discipline that it is the direct result of God’s chastening hand upon someone.
 - a. When Jesus was traveling around with His disciples they came across a man who was blind from birth and His disciples asked Him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.” (**Jn. 9:2-3**)
 - b. Just because someone is experiencing a tough time does not mean it is the direct result of sin. God may allow it simply to show Himself faithful, to prove to others that He is able to do the impossible like bring sight back to the blind.
 6. So, does everyone understand? Just because someone is experiencing what may appear to be chastening, does not necessarily mean that they are in sin or that somehow God is disapproving of their lifestyle or their walk.
- E. With that disclaimer out of the way, let’s go ahead and move forward in our study.
- F. This morning, we’re going to look at the chastening hand of God and as we do so we’re going to note six things pertaining to this topic. The first of which comes as an imperative from verse 5. Take a look at it with me.
- III. Hebrews 12:5a; Don’t Despise God’s Chastening
- A. You may recall from early on in our study of the book of Hebrews that one of things the author challenged these people with was the fact that they had allowed themselves to become dull of hearing. (**Heb. 5:11**)
1. They weren’t paying close attention to the word of God, they weren’t growing by it; instead they were remaining in a child-like state, having to relearn their spiritual ABCs all over again.
 2. Here in our text, the author tells them that they have forgotten the exhortation that speaks to them as sons. And he goes on to quote for them Proverbs 3:11 & 12

- a. "My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor detest His correction; For whom the Lord loves He corrects, Just as a father the son in whom he delights." (**Pro. 3:11-12**)
- 3. These people had forgotten God's Word to them. And that word "forgotten" that is used here, is only used this one time in all of the NT.
- 4. It is an intensified form of the verb to forget. It isn't just that it momentarily slipped their mind. The idea behind the usage of this word indicates that it was something that was forgotten entirely, or utterly.
- 5. They had absolutely no reconciliation of this word from the Lord in the book of Proverbs. They were acting like it was something completely foreign to them. They had completely and utterly forgot this exhortation from Proverbs that applied to them as children of the Lord.
- B. And the very first thing this proverb speaks of is a command to not despise the chastening of the Lord.
 - 1. That word despise means to regard something as having little to no value, to consider something of little worth, or to esteem lightly. To treat it as if it were worthless, or to disregard something completely.
 - 2. The author needed to remind these people that part of what they may be experiencing may have to do with the chastening of the Lord.
 - 3. These people were experiencing some difficulties, some persecution and some touch situations, and the author here reminds them that this very well could be the chastening hand of the Lord.
 - a. Again, remember that the chastening of the Lord does not only mean the disciplining of the Lord, but it can be understood as instruction and teaching as well.
 - b. It could be that God is allowing these situations and circumstances in their lives in order to teach them something, in order to instruct them in their continued walk with the Lord.
 - 4. He exhorts them, do not despise the chastening of the Lord. Do not think lightly of God's chastening. Do not write it off as something of little to no value.
 - 5. God is wanting to teach them something, He's wanting to show them something, wanting to reveal an area in their life where maybe they've gotten a little off track and He's trying to get their attention so that they can get back on course, back to running the race towards the finish line.
 - 6. And this exhortation is just as important and applicable to us. It's the first point we'll make regarding the chastening hand of God. We are commanded **not to despise the chastening of the Lord**.
 - 7. Don't think lightly of the fact that God is trying to get your attention.
 - a. Maybe you've been reading through your devotions lately and God keeps on speaking to you about a particular area of your life.
 - b. Maybe you've been struggling in a certain area and you know God is wanting to make some corrections, but you're resisting that work He

- wants to do. Your trying to ignore it, or disregard it, but it keeps on popping up.
- c. Maybe God's sending other people to speak into your life the same exact thing you've been hearing through your devotions. Or maybe you come to church and the teaching seems to be hitting that same subject matter He's been wanting to deal with in your life.
- d. Listen, don't despise the chastening of the Lord. God has ways of getting our attention and when we disregard Him, or think lightly of His chastening, God has a way of turning up the heat and making it even more difficult to ignore Him.
- 8. Yield yourself to the disciplining hand of the Lord. Let Him speak into your life and receive from Him whatever it is He is wanting to show you.
- C. The next point we want to make is also found in verse 5 and it is a command that comes from the Proverb the author quoted. It reads...
 - IV. Hebrews 12:5b; Don't Be Discouraged by God's Chastening
 - A. The second thing we want to note this morning as it pertains to the chastening hand of God is that we are **not to be discouraged by it**.
 - 1. The sense of the word "discouraged" carries with it the idea of growing weary, or losing heart; becoming fainthearted to the point where you want to simply throw in the towel.
 - 2. As we discussed last week, we have need of endurance. We are called to run with endurance the race that is set before us. We can't get weary and tired just because God corrects us or rebukes us.
 - B. Listen, we're all going to experience this throughout our life with the Lord.
 - 1. It doesn't say not to be discouraged *if* you are rebuked by Him, but it says "when you are rebuked by Him." It's not a matter of "if" but "when".
 - a. When God rebukes us, we can't just give up and throw in the towel.
 - 2. That word rebuke carries with it the idea of reproof and correction, of being sternly admonished in a certain area of your life. It speaks of conviction. God, through His Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment according to John 16. (**Jn. 16:8**)
 - 3. Conviction is a good thing. Conviction is something God uses to draw us closer to Him.
 - 4. We must learn to differentiate between conviction and condemnation.
 - a. God doesn't condemn us. We have been washed in the blood of the Lamb; our sins are forgiven.
 - b. The Bible teaches us, "there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." (**Rom. 8:1**)
 - c. Condemnation is from the enemy. The enemy is the one that whispers lies into our ears telling us that we are no good, that we should just give up, that we're no different from the rest of the world.

- d. That's the enemy. The enemy uses condemnation to try and drive us further away from the Lord. But conviction draws us to the Lord.
 - 5. We need to learn to embrace conviction, to embrace those loving rebukes that come via the Holy Spirit, that come through the Word of God, that come through loving brothers and sisters of the Lord.
 - 6. Don't be discouraged by the chastening of the Lord. We all experience it, and we all need it.
- C. Let's continue in our text and note a very important element to God's chastening in our lives. Take a look at verse 6.
- V. Hebrews 12:6; God Chastens Because of Love
- A. Here we are given one of the reasons why God chastens us. He chastens us **because He loves us**.
- 1. Because God loves us and wants what is best for us, He isn't going to allow us to get away with sin, He isn't going to allow us to go without correction, without instruction. He's going to teach us what is right and what is wrong because He cares about the kind of people we are and the kind of people we will become.
 - 2. Farah's parents used to have a sign up in their house, I don't know if they still do or not, but it read "Jesus loves us just as we are, but He loves us too much to leave us that way".
 - 3. And while that isn't necessarily a verse in the Bible, the sentiment and principle is very much a biblical one. God loves us as we are. He loved us even while we were still sinners.
 - a. The Bible says that God demonstrated His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (**Rom. 5:8**)
 - 4. But God loves us too much to allow us to remain in our sinful state. He wants to grow us, to mature us. He wants to see us become more and more like His Son He sent for us.
 - 5. And so, He disciplines us. He corrects us. He teaches us. He molds and shapes us into the image of the Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ.
- B. For those of us who are parents we understand this principle. We understand that we correct our children and instruct them because we love them and want what is best for them.
- 1. Children don't know what is best for them. Children do dumb things. They do sinful things. I know, I've had five of them. Three are out of the house and two are still with us in the home. And even after decades of training they still do dumb things, they still do sinful things.
 - 2. And I hate to burst any of your bubbles, but your sweet little bundle of joy is no saint. They sin because they are sinners. It's inherent. They are born with a sinful nature and if left to themselves they will sin.
 - a. Proverbs 22:15 states, "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of correction will drive it far from him." (**Pr. 22:15**)

- 3. And it is the loving parent who will insure their child isn't left to their own means, isn't left to their own sinful nature, but will lovingly correct them and teach them the difference between what is right and what is wrong.
 - 4. And you do it because you love them. You want what is best for them.
 - 5. The same is true with our heavenly Father. He loves us. He wants what is best for us, so He disciplines us.
- C. Take a look at verses 7 & 8 and we'll note one more reason why God chastens us.
- VI. Hebrews 12:7-8; God Chastens Because We are His
- A. The emphasis in these verses has to do with sonship.
- 1. Now, just so you ladies don't feel left out this word "sons" doesn't just apply to males, to literal sons, but to all who are the descendants of the Lord; all the children of God.
- B. The end of verse 6 spoke of how God scourges every son whom He receives. This emphasis is not upon son, but those whom He receives. He receives both sons and daughters, and He scourges both sons and daughters. So ladies, you're not left out here when it comes to correction.
- 1. That word scourge is a bit difficult to get around for some. It literally means to whip. Some find it hard to imagine a gracious loving heavenly Father being at the end of a device such as a whip, or a belt, or strap, or switch, or paddle, or wooden spoon, or chancla, or whatever device you may have had used on you, or have used yourself.
 - 2. But it shouldn't be that hard to imagine. Jesus Himself made a whip of cords and used it drive out all the livestock, the merchants, and moneychangers out of His Father's house while pouring out the changers' money and flipping over their tables. (**Jn. 2:15**)
- C. Verse 7 says if you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; again sons and daughters.
- D. For what son (or daughter) is there whom a father does not chasten?
- 1. Now back in the first century and the culture of that day, it was expected that every father would chasten, or discipline, their own children. It's weird because it seemed like it was like that in my day as well.
 - 2. But more recently this seems to be something that isn't so much understood as a normal thing. The question *is* meant to be *rhetorical*.
 - a. "For what son is there whom a father does not chasten?" None. That's the implied answer to this rhetorical question. None. But I don't know if that is what is expected by people today.
 - b. People today are into trying all sorts of different parenting styles. There's authoritarian parenting, authoritative parenting, attachment parenting, free range parenting, gentle parenting, helicopter parenting, uninvolved parenting, permissive parenting, and a whole lot of other nonsense.

- c. Maybe people, and *especially Christians*, should just try Biblical parenting. Read the bible and see what God says about parenting.
 - i. Read the book of Proverbs and see what God has to say about discipline and instruction.
 - ii. Read the Gospels and find out what Jesus thought about children and their importance in the kingdom of God.
 - iii. Read Paul's epistles where he highlights the roles and responsibilities of both parents and children and what their relationship should look like.
 - d. You can try all those other ways, but I don't know why you would when God has given you clear instructions in His Word.
3. Every father, and I think we can include mothers here as well, is responsible for disciplining their own children. Ultimately the father should be the one responsible for this, but he may delegate part of this responsibility to the mom when he isn't around.
- a. (Again, I don't know about you, but I definitely preferred spankings from mom over dad. When my mom said, "you just wait till your father gets home", that was never a good day.)
 - b. Now again, the emphasis in these verses is upon the fact that you are a son or daughter, it's based upon relationship.
 - c. I may see my neighbors' kids and think, "man, those kids need a firm talking to, or they need a good ol' fashion swat across their rear ends", and my neighbors may look at my kids and think the same.
 - d. But I'm not going to discipline my neighbors' kids, because I don't have that kind of relationship with them. And my neighbor isn't going to lay their hands upon my children either because they don't have that kind of relationship with them.
 - e. It's all about relationship. When there is no relationship, there is no correction, there is no chastening.
4. That is what it means when the author writes in verse 8 about how if you are without chastening, then you are illegitimate and not sons.
- a. An illegitimate child didn't receive the loving correction and attention of a father. They didn't have a dad; they didn't have someone to teach them those important lessons. To discipline them and instruct them in what was best.
 - b. They were left on their own and didn't receive any sort of chastening, any sort of instruction and the very fact that they didn't receive any sort of instruction or discipline just went to show that they were never really part of a family.
- E. So, we see that God's chastening is not only a sign of His great love for us, it is also a sign of His relationship to us.

- 1. God **chastens us because we are His**, because we belong to Him, we are His sons and daughters and therefore we will receive chastening throughout our lives.
 - 2. His chastening hand is evidence of His relationship with us. It is evidence that He sees us and treats us as His own.
 - 3. A father doesn't chasten those whom he has no relationship with. And so, if you claim to be a believer in the Lord, but yet, you've never experienced the chastening hand of the Lord, I would wonder about your standing with the Lord.
 - 4. For as the author writes, the expectation is that we've all become partakers of God's chastening, *if* we are His sons and daughters.
- F. Lets continue in our study and look at one more reason why God chastens us found in verses 9 & 10. Read them again with me.

VII. Hebrews 12:9-10; God Chastens for Our Profit

- A. The author continues to use the analogy of a human father and how he disciplines his own children to develop another important truth about God's hand of chastening.
- 1. Most of us hopefully had human fathers who corrected us. That word "corrected" has the same root word as chasten in the rest of our text. The implication is the same. Human fathers chasten, or correct and we showed them respect, we yielded to their authority.
- B. (Now, I do want to pause here for a second, because maybe some here today did not have a good example of a father figure in their life growing up. And the idea of even picturing God as a Heavenly father is something that is difficult for you to do because you had someone in your life who marred the image of what a father should be.
- 1. I want to encourage you today, that whether or not you had a good father in your life, you shouldn't let that change the way you see or view your heavenly Father.
 - 2. Intrinsically, we know what a father should be like. We know that if we had an abusive father, whether physical or emotional or verbal, that what we experienced was wrong.
 - 3. God the Father is a loving and caring and compassionate being. He loves us without measure, and He wants what is best for us always.)
- C. Back to our text. Our human fathers according to the flesh, disciplined us for a season doing what they thought was best.
- 1. Now, no human earthly father is perfect. We're still sinners too. And we're still learning and growing even as parents. And we'll make mistakes sometimes, but hopefully we are doing our what we believe is best and what is in accordance with God's word.
 - 2. And the interesting thing about parenting is that it changes from child to child. Not because you are inconsistent, but because each child is different and unique.

- a. I won't name any names so as to save some from potential embarrassment or shame. But some of our boys only needed a disappointing look upon our faces or a sharp rebuke to get them to break down in tears, while others were strong willed and incredibly stiff-necked and often brought us to tears while trying to discipline them.
 - b. Farah and I have five sons and each one was unique and each one needed different types of discipline in order to instruct them and correct them and get them to change their behavior.
3. With each child we grew a little bit wiser and we learned that each one needed a different approach to discipline and chastening.
 4. But we did our best, and we tried to learn from our mistakes.
- D. But with our heavenly Father, His chastening is perfect. He knows us better than we know ourselves and He knows exactly what is needed to get our attention and to get us headed back on the right track.
1. Our human fathers chastened us to the best of their ability, but God's discipline of us is perfect and it is always for our profit.
 2. Sometimes as a parent, we discipline based upon our own needs. We need the kids to be quiet, we need them to stop fighting, to stop yelling because we long for just a little bit of peace and quiet.
 3. Our discipline is not perfect, but God's is. And His discipline, His chastening hand is always for our benefit. It is for our profit. That we may be partakers of His holiness.
 4. As He disciplines us, He is preparing us for eternity in His presence. He is preparing us to become partakers of His holiness.
 5. God chastens us because He loves us, He chastens us because we are His, and here we see that **God chastens us for our profit.**
 6. It is for our own good, for our own maturing, for our own preparation for what lies ahead that God chastens us.
 7. Whenever we feel the chastening hand of the Lord upon us, we can be thankful and grateful that He is at work in our lives, working towards our profit, for our gain, that we may become more and more like Him.
- E. Let's take a look at our last verse and wrap things up so we can partake of communion today as a church family. Read verse 11 with me.
- VIII. Hebrews 12:11; God's Chastening Yields Fruit
- A. No chastening seems to be joyful for the present. That seems to go without saying.
1. Nobody likes getting spanked, nobody likes being rebuked, or reprimanded, or corrected, or disciplined. Nobody likes that.
 2. None of us woke up this morning thinking to ourselves, "Boy, I hope I get a really good whopping today".
3. Chastening isn't fun. It isn't enjoyable. It doesn't feel good. In fact, as it clearly states here in verse 11, it is painful; it hurts, sometimes physically, other times emotionally, and sometimes both.
- B. It is not a pleasant experience in the present. But, nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.
1. That word trained in the Greek is the word "gymnazo" and is where we get our English word gymnasium from. It speaks of the training and discipline that the Olympic athletes would go through.
 2. The subject their bodies to pain and suffering in order to better prepare them to compete for the prize. They hit the gym and understand the old cliché, "No pain, no gain", and "Pain is just weakness leaving the body."
 3. They go through the pain, in order to best prepare themselves for what lies ahead of them.
 4. In like manner, those who learn to endure the chastening of the Lord, end up being better prepared for what lies ahead.
- C. But here is the thing I want to draw our attention to. These things take time. In the present, chastening doesn't seem good. Nevertheless, afterwards it yields fruit.
1. That word "yield" is an agricultural term. It speaks of a producing fruit or seed. And everyone knows that it takes time for a seed to eventually bring about fruit. You can't plant an apple seed and then anticipate an apple tree the next day. It takes time.
 2. The same principle applies in the chastening God brings us through. It doesn't seem very good, it doesn't seem to be for our profit, it doesn't even seem like God love us, or that He is thinking about us.
 3. But these things take time. We may not see the fruit from God's chastening immediately, often times we won't. But if we will allow God to train us through His chastening hand, eventually we'll see the fruit, eventually we'll see parts of what God was working out in us and for us. We'll see how God's loving discipline and correction from previous years, or previous seasons, has helped mold and shape us for what we are dealing with today.
- D. If we will allow ourselves to be trained by God's chastening then we will **experience the peaceable fruit of righteousness** in our own lives. God chastens us towards that end. He wants to give us His peace, He wants to give us His righteousness.
1. When things seem to be chaotic and crazy, we can have peace, knowing that God is at work. When we're facing trials and difficulties and challenging times, we can stand secure in the peace of God and know that our standing with the Lord is secure.
 2. He loves us, He wants what is best for us, and He is working out things in our lives that only He knows about, things that are preparing us not

just for our immediate future here on earth, but our eternal future with Him in heaven as well. Amen? Amen.

IX. Conclusion/ Communion

- A. This morning, we're going to take just a few minutes to come to the Lord's Table to participate in communion. This is something that we as a church like to do on the first Sunday of each month
1. Scripturally, there isn't a mandate on when or how often we are to partake of communion. The expectation is that it is done regularly. The scriptures simply say "as often as you do this..." for us that happens to be each month.
- B. Remember that partaking of communion is a great time to simply reflect upon all the Lord is doing in your life at the moment. To take time to consider what God is trying to show you, what things He is wanting to work upon, what things He wants to perhaps change in our lives.
- C. Communion is a time to remember what Christ did for us. To remember His crucifixion upon the cross of Calvary. To remember His shed blood that was poured out as an offering for our sins.
1. But it is also a great time of reflection. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 11 "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup." **(1 Co. 11:28)**
 2. Not only is it a time of remembrance and a good time for reflection, but it can also be a great time of repentance. Again, Paul writes, "For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord (that same Greek word from our text today), that we may not be condemned with the world. **(1 Co. 11:31-32)**
 3. God basically says, "Hey, if you would actually repent, then I wouldn't need to judge. But since you don't repent, you will be judged and you will experience the chastening of the Lord."
 4. My encouragement to you all is that if God is speaking to you today about something He is wanting you to repent from, something He is calling you to turn away from, that you would confess that to Him this morning and truly repent from that sin and forsake it.
 5. Spare yourself the chastening hand of the Lord. Learn your lesson now, so that you don't have to endure the chastening later.
- D. The worship team is going to come up and lead us in a time of worship and the ushers will distribute the communion elements. Take the next few minutes to spend with the Lord. Remember what He has done for you, reflect upon the things He has been showing you, and repent if necessary so that you don't have to experience the full extent of His chastening.
- E. After everyone has been served, I'll come back up and lead us in partaking together. Let's spend some time with the Lord.