

Today, we are going to close out chapter 20 of the book of Proverbs with one verse that I think is a great study on one of the key elements of our relationship with God. Preachers are famous for preaching on certain things in the Bible that they know are good things to preach on, things that make people happy. The subject that I am going to preach on today is not really talked about much, and I understand why. It is not a very popular, pleasant thing to talk about, but it should be. I want to talk to you about the chastisement of God in your life and in my life when it comes. Sooner or later, it will come in our lives. It is based on Proverbs 20:30.

## I. The Modern Church's Aversion to Truth

If you have been around much, you know that Christians and Christianity today only want the positive side of things. They do not want any negative. The whole realm of the Laodicean church, the hallmark of it, is teaching, not preaching. Everybody has shifted to the place where when you teach, you edify and you give great things and you talk about great things. Everything is a low threshold of truth where you just want to keep everybody happy, make everybody happy. You do not want to preach on subjects that are going to cause you some problems in your church. You try to keep it as easy and balanced as you can.

Christians today have come to the point where they have gotten so far out of the truth of the Bible, and they have lost what it really means to have a real, working, honest, viable relationship with God. They live in this dream world that they call Christianity where everything is fine and there is no negative. Many, many churches never preach on sin. In fact, you would think that the devil died if you went into some of those places. Of course, he did not. Christians and Christianity only want the positive side of Christianity. They cannot deal with the negative things.

I say that in light of, and we have talked about this many, many times, I think it is one of the greatest verses in the Bible. It is a great message to preach, a great devotion, and it is just a great principle. It is found in 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

*2 Timothy 3:16-17*

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*

*That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

I want you to see something here. We have talked about this before. I want you to see that, first of all, the Bible, the Word of God, is good for doctrine. Doctrine is good; doctrine is teaching. Then the second thing that it is good for is instruction in righteousness. That is a good thing. When you have what the Bible teaches and then you instruct somebody, that is a good thing.

But the other two things in here are not very positive. One of the things he talks about here is that all scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof. That is negative.

That is bad. And then correction. The Christian life boils down to just 50-50. There are going to be times that you have the good things in life that you do with God, and there are going to be times where God has to come down, and there are going to be some negative things in your Christian life.

When you get doctrine, and here is the reason, when you get doctrine, doctrine is truth. When you get the truth in your life, I am going to tell you, this is true of all of us. When you find the truth of God in your life, I am just going to tell you right now, there are some things about your life you are going to have to correct. I have never met anybody in my life that found the Word of God and said, "Oh, I am good, I do not need to fix anything." When you are a human being and you find the truth of God, there are some things. When you get doctrine, there are some things that you are going to have to correct. That will lead sometimes, in some cases, to a rebuke.

At the end of the day, you know what it brings? It brings the instruction of righteousness, and that is the key. The key for you and me is to get to the point where we get God's instructions in our life about everything that He wants. But I want you to know, there is no instruction of righteousness without the first three: doctrine, reproof, and correction. You can kid yourself all you want to think that there is nothing wrong with you. You can kid yourself all you want, but you think that you are okay. I am telling you, when you find the Word of God, or I should say, when the Word of God finds you, I have told you many, many times, the Bible is the only book in the world where when you start to read it, it starts to read you. When you get into the Bible, it is going to show you some things, show you some things that you need to fix. That is hard for God's people today.

## II. The Sweetness of Bitter Truth

One of our favorite verses, it has been a favorite verse of mine for many, many years, is in Proverbs 27:7. We have not gotten there yet, but we will.

*Proverbs 27:7*

*The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.*

Some of God's people get so full of the Word of God, and they get so full of all the things that they have, the way they want it, that they get to the point where they just lose sight of the Bible. They like going to church, they like this, but they do not want to. They loathe the Word of God. They do not want to take what the Bible says and let it affect their life. Yet the Bible says, "to the hungry soul, even the bitter things are sweet."

You and I need to come to the place in our life that understands there are some bitter things in that Bible that are going to go against my grain. There are some things that I am going to read, some things that I am going to have to apply that my old nature really does not like. But you know what? When you love the book, when you get to the place where you love the Word of God more than anything else on this planet, you realize that God only gave it to you for your good. He gave it to us to help us, not to hurt us.

When you recognize that God will never do anything in your world to hurt you, only to help you, then you get the understanding that the rebuke, the correction, the negative things in the Bible, even they become the sweet things of the Word of God. The bitter things of God become sweet to us. Why? Because we get understanding. We realize what God is doing.

The real sign of a mature Christian, I mean, I know everybody wants to present themselves as a mature Christian, but I will tell you something. The real sign of a mature Christian is not how you get along when everything goes good in your life. The real sign of a mature Christian is how you function when your world falls apart, how you function when you have got to deal with some things, how you function when you get the rebuke.

You have people come to churches, and one of the reasons why pastors in the day and age that we live in have switched from the preaching mode into the teaching mode is because people would not put up with it. He would get up there and he would preach about something, people would get mad. He would get up there and lay out something in the Bible that was true, people would get mad. He would have all kinds of issues he would have to deal with, and because he himself does not understand what God has called him to do, it is easier. It is easier just to sidestep all those things, tell you how nice you are, tell you how wonderful you are, tell you how beautiful you are, tell you how great you are, and then you all go out there happy, but you do not change one thing in your life.

You are all beautiful this morning. Everything is beautiful. You are all lovely. You are all the finest people on the planet, but I am going to tell you something, there are some things that we need to change. The quicker you understand that, the better off you are. The real mark of a mature Christian is, when you are faced with that rebuke, when you are faced with that correction, when you are faced with something that you have got to do right with in your life, what is your attitude about that?

We think that because we put out a positive attitude, we have a smiley face on all the time, and we are happy and we talk about, we use the catch words, "Praise the Lord," and all that stuff, that everybody gets the idea that we are just a wonderful Christian and everything is just fine in our life. That is not the defining moment of your life. The defining moment of your life is when everything falls apart, or you have to face some things.

Manly Beasley, he is long dead now, but he was an incredible preacher. He was a credible guy. I have heard him preach many, many, many times, and he always had words of wisdom that just defined wisdom in my mind. It was incredible the things he would say. He said one time, he was preaching, and he asked a question. He said to the congregation, "What do you get when you squeeze a lemon?" A lady down front raised her hand, and he called on her and she says, "Well, you get lemon juice." He says, "That is exactly the answer I wanted."

He says, "Back down," and he was down south someplace. He said, "Back down in my hometown about three or four years ago, there was a guy that was going into grocery stores, and he was injecting poison into the lemons. People were buying the, just a little needle. He put it in there. People were buying the lemons. They would go home and make lemonade or whatever they did with it, and they were dying." He said there was a thing that they, they finally caught the

guy, but it was incredible. He says, "Those people thought when they squeezed those lemons, they were going to get lemon juice, but in reality, what they got was really on the inside." Then he said, "What do you get when you squeeze a Christian?" You would think you would get Christian juice. You would think you would get the perfect thing of a Christian. He said, "You know what you get when you squeeze a Christian? You get what is really on the inside."

That is why it is not about your smile this morning, though it is a lovely smile. It is not about your demeanor this morning, though I am glad you are not mean. I am not sure that is what that means, but you know where I am going with it. The real mark of a mature Christian is when you get squeezed up against what you have got to change in your life, what are you going to do? Some of God's people get mad at God, they get angry at God, and they walk away from God. They leave church, they get mad at the preacher, they will blame everything on everybody else except themselves.

I have had people all my life, Christians who go to church, they judge everything in that church. They will judge the song service, they will judge the temperature, they will judge this, they will judge that. I do not know how many times, years ago, until I fixed the problem, people would come up to me and say, "It is so hot in here." So I would go turn it down a little bit. Somebody else would come up and say, "It is so cold in here." So I figured it out, we put a thermostat back there that is not hooked up to anything. They come to me and they say, "It is cold around," I said, "Put it wherever you want to put it. We are here, this is like Burger King, you can have it your way. Just go back and put that temperature." I have never heard a complaint since. Because they are all nuts and it is all up here in their brain. One woman back there, she put it up to 90 degrees. "Oh, wow, it is really warm in here." It has not changed a thing. Somebody else put it down to 35. "Oh man, I am really good now." It has not changed a thing.

That is the way Christian life is. Most Christians live in a dream world. You have got to have an absolute thermostat to tell you how hot or how cold you are. You know what works for you that way? It is the Word of God. The Word of God is your thermostat that will tell you this morning, "Well, are you hot or are you cold?" And there is no guessing. It is not where "I think I am," but "it is all in my brain." No, you either are or you are not when you get in that book. That book will do some things for you. It will help you with some things.

There is a verse back in Proverbs 28:5. We have not gotten there yet either, but we will.

*Proverbs 28:5*

*Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the Lord understand all things.*

In the context, that is talking about the world. I want to say that the key to your Christian life or my Christian life is really simply one little phrase: "understanding all things." When you get understanding in the Bible, you can look at life, the world, people, circumstances, situations, the world around you, and you understand it. Understanding is how you perceive it from God's standpoint. In the context, I get it. It is talking about the unsaved world. But do you know there are a lot of God's people just like the world, only saved, in this world we are living in?

For most of God's people, they just get angry and bitter with God when they do not understand God's judgment. When the negative things come in life, when the things of God's judgment hit them, when God comes down and has to deal with them, they get angry at God. They get bitter at God. They do not understand. They do not have a handle on what the chastisement of God really means in your life and my life. They think it is something negative. They think it is something bad, and in their world, they determine chastisement of God as something that is terrible. I want to tell you something. There is not anything that God does for you that winds up being terrible. But some of the things we do to God are.

We cannot receive the chastisement of God because we can never recognize God in our own lives. We are oblivious to it. We live our lives, and we just go on with what we want, oblivious to God, the Word of God, the principles of God, and we cannot receive the judgment of God when it comes in our life simply because of the fact that we do not understand it.

### III. The Seven Judgments and the Sinner, Son, Servant Framework

In the Bible, there are seven distinct judgments laid out in the Word of God. It is part of that seven series of understanding the Bible, which we will go through in the institute. It is totally unheard of today.

1. You will find in Psalms 105:7, you have a judgment of Israel when they go through the Tribulation period.
2. You will find in Matthew 25:32 that there is a judgment of the nations at the Second Coming of Christ.
3. In 1 Corinthians 6:3, the Bible says there is a coming of time when you and I as Christians are going to judge the fallen angels.
4. The fourth one will be the judgment of the unsaved dead, all the unsaved people found in Revelation 20:11.

The last three judgments deal with you and me.

5. The fifth judgment will be the judgment of you and me as a sinner at the cross of Calvary. When Jesus Christ died on the cross, you and I were judged as a guilty sinner right there on the spot. The Bible says at that point, the wrath of God already abides on us before you were even born. When Christ died on the cross, He judged every man a guilty sinner. So when you look at it that way, the judgment of you and me as a sinner took place at Calvary's cross.
6. The next judgment, or the sixth one, is when you get saved. When you get saved and God no longer looks at you as a sinner, this is hard for people today because you still sin. So people say, "Well, if I still sin, how come I am not a sinner?" It is not the terminology, it is how God now looks at you. Once you become God's child, you are no longer a sinner in His sight, you are now His son in His sight. The only question is, are you an obedient child or a disobedient child? That is the only question. So in this life here, you see, you were judged as a sinner at the cross of Calvary. When you got saved and you began your journey with God, now He is going to judge you as His son, not as a sinner.

7. When you get in a future reference, the seventh one is the judgment of you and me as a servant, at the Judgment Seat of Christ. There you will be judged for your service. You will not be judged for your sins there; you will be judged for your sins in this life now after you get saved. You will be judged for your service.

Dr. Ruckman years ago explained this in a little book that we have in a bookstore back there. It is one of the greatest little things I ever read. It is called Sinner, Son, and Service. You were a Sinner at Calvary's cross and God judged you as a Sinner. Then you got saved and through your life now, God deals with you as His Son. When you get to the Judgment Seat of Christ, He is going to judge you as a Servant. Sinner, Son, and Servant. It is the three-aspect balance of the Christian life.

When Christ died on the cross, He judged me as a Sinner. I woke up to that fact and got saved. He no longer looks at me as a Sinner, so therefore He does not look at my sin the same way. Now it is paid for. Now I am His child. Now I am His Son. Now I belong to Him and His family. It is this thing where when I get to the Judgment Seat of Christ, He is going to judge me as a Servant. Right now as a Son, if I get out of line, He is going to whack me. If I get out of line, He is going to give me a chance to get it right. He is going to give me a chance. We will talk about it here in a little bit. He is going to give me a chance to make it right with Him. But if I do not, if I refuse to do it, if I just get bowheaded, I want to do it my way. Then He is going to come down and talk to you. He is a good talker.

#### IV. What a Christian Can Lose (Without Losing Salvation)

There are a lot of good people out there who struggle with the idea that they can lose their salvation. I feel bad for them. Most of them are very good people, but they go through life with the burden and the struggle and the monkey on their back that they think that they can lose their salvation. We know you cannot. The doctrine of salvation is very clear in the Bible to anybody that can read it. But here is how that happens. You cannot lose your salvation, but there are some things you can lose as a Christian that will make you think you can lose your salvation. You cannot lose your salvation. Let me make it very clear. You cannot lose your salvation, but there are some things you can lose. I will tell you what they are.

8. The first thing you can lose as a Christian is your Bible. You quit reading your Bible. You do not get into the Bible on a regular basis. You are going to lose your Bible. It is not going to be important to you.
9. The next thing that is going to happen to you, you are going to lose your church. When you do not read the Bible, you are going to start finding fault with everything around you except yourself. You are going to judge everything around you when you go to church except judging yourself. You know why? Because you lost your Bible and then you are going to lose your church.
10. You know what happens after you lose your Bible and you lose your church? You are going to lose your joy. There is no more joy, joy, joy down in your heart. You can always tell a child of God if they have the joy in their life. Sunday morning is always a telltale time. You find somebody that is way out there and they are not happy, and they are struggling. They are not

doing what is right. You are bubbly and they are not. They look like they have been baptized in dill pickle juice. You go up and you talk about the Lord, you get that "ooh" right off of them. They are not where you are at. They do not have the joy, joy, joy down in their heart.

11. Once you lose the joy, you know what goes next, do not you? You lose your fellowship. You do not fellowship with God anymore.
12. Once you lose your fellowship, then you lose your relationship with Him.
13. Once you lose your relationship with Him, your prayer life goes out the window.
14. Once you lose all of those things, your walk with Him every day goes out the window.

You know that you can lose a lot of things without losing your salvation. We talk about discipleship. We talk about discipleship coming from the word discipline. You learn that the word means that you have to discipline yourself to something. The disciples, back in the Bible, were people who disciplined themselves to the teaching of Christ. If you are here this morning, you are in the Bible, you are doing what is right, you are His disciple. You have disciplined yourself to the teachings of Christ.

Now, I say that so you know, there are no apostles today. You find some charismatic woman that says, "I am an apostle." No, she is nuts. She is not an apostle. You find some guys get a douche, "This is Apostle Brother So-and-so." No, there are no apostles. There were certain characteristics given in the New Testament that you had to have to be an apostle. Nobody today can meet those requirements. That is just a little Bible thing, but it will help you out. There are no apostles today. But everybody here, if you are in the Bible, you are doing what is right, and you are saved, you are His disciple.

Now, you can lose your Bible, you can lose your church, you can lose your joy, you can lose your fellowship, you can lose your relationship, you can lose your prayer life, you can lose your walk. You know you can lose your discipleship. You know you can still be saved and lose being Christ's disciple. Most people do not know that. Probably most pastors would not believe that. Over there in Mark 16:7, after Peter denied the Lord Jesus Christ and they are trying to all get back together, Jesus says, "Tell my disciples and Peter." See that thing? Peter lost his discipleship. There are little things in the Bible like that that most people, they get in a big hurry, they never see. When you study the Bible, you ought to study it like you are looking for an AIDS virus in your own blood test. Get after it.

You can lose your discipleship. He said, "Tell my disciples and Peter." You lose your Bible, you lose your church, you lose your fellowship. These are things you can lose without ever losing your salvation. You will lose your Bible, you will lose your church, you will lose your joy, you will lose your fellowship, you will lose your relationship, your prayer life, your walk, and you will lose being a disciple. Then you know the last thing that you lose? You will lose your assurance that you are saved. My assurance of my salvation is based on these eight things here. So you can lose a lot of things, but never losing your salvation.

When that happens in our Christian life, when we get to the point that we get out of fellowship with God and we do our own thing and we go our own way and we will not make it right with God, then Proverbs 20:30 will come into play, if you do not fix it yourself. The chastisement of

God in our life, my life as His Son. Remember, Sinner, Son, and Servant. You were judged at the cross as a Sinner. When you got saved until you die or go home to be with the Lord, you are now dealt with as His Son. When we get to the Judgment Seat of Christ, you are dealt with now in your Service.

## V. The Blueness of a Wound and God's Chastisement

Let us read Proverbs 20:30. It is our text today and it says this:

*Proverbs 20:30*

*The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil: so do stripes the inward parts of the belly.*

"The blueness of a wound." That is a deep penetrating wound. A blue wound is a bad wound. It is a deep wound. It is a wound that bruises you. We use the term black and blue. Yet here, it is not talking about a physical wound that you and I would get. This wound here cleanses away sin. If you notice it, the stripes here, the whipping, are in the inward parts of the belly, not on your physical body. You need to see that.

What this verse is showing us and teaching us about when God comes down and takes us to the woodshed, the chastisement of God in our life. Doctrinally, in the context, this will be a reference to Israel going through the chastisement of God in the Tribulation, one of the seven judgments. Inspirationally, as it applies to you and me, it is you and me in the hand of God coming into our life as a Son to deal with our unconfessed sin and cleaning the evil out of our lives.

The definitive chapter or the definitive passage in the Bible on God's chastisement for you and for me is found in Hebrews 12. Let us look over there real quick. Hebrews 12, we will pick it up in verse five and we will read it down through verse 11. Remember now, Sinner, Son, and Servant. You want to remember that. When Christ died on the cross, He judged every man on this earth as a Sinner. Once you got saved, He no longer judges you as a Sinner, now He judges you as His Son. This is what we are talking about. Once you get past this life and you show up at the Judgment Seat of Christ, now He will judge you as a Sinner, Son, and Servant.

*Hebrews 12:5-11*

*And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:*

*For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.*

*If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?*

*But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.*

*Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?*

*For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.*

*Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.*

As I said, this is the definitive chapter or verses in your Bible on the chastisement of God in your life. Doctrinally, it will go to Israel. Inspirationally, it will go to me and you, those parallels between the two.

I want you to notice a few things here. First of all, look at verse five. He says, "which speaketh unto you as children, My son." There it is, Sinner, Son, and Servant. He is talking about you and me in this life now after we are saved, but before we go to the Judgment Seat of Christ and God dealing with us as children. Then he says in verse five, that we are not to despise nor faint when we are rebuked. There should be no despising or no rebuking when it comes into our lives. The reason for that, it should be that you understand it. You realize that "whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." You realize that God is doing what He is doing to you because He loves you.

I tell parents all the time, there is a process in disciplining your children. If you want a child to grow up in a good, balanced, proper way, they are going to have to be disciplined. It is just going to happen. It is going to have to happen. When you discipline that child, there is a process by which you do it. You realize that you are not whipping them, disciplining them, whatever the form is that you are using, you are not doing it because you are upset with them. You are doing it because of the fact that this is God's family. You are God's children in this family. We have an obligation to train you up and raise you to honor and glorify God, and there are some things in your life we are not going to permit. You need to understand it. It is not that I do not love you. It is the fact that I do love you. If I do not love you, I would never discipline you. I would just let you run wild. That is not love. That is the inability to fix a problem. When you love your children, you will discipline them. It is just that simple. You will make sure that they have the guidance that they need because they are going to need it.

That is what the Bible says here. Understanding whom God loveth, He chasteneth and scourgeth every son. Everybody goes through it. Just like every Christian has to go through that process of God dealing with them through chastisement, so does every kid growing up in a family. When you deny them that, you are going to have some problems.

Then look at verse eight.

*Hebrews 12:8*

*But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.*

It is pretty simple. God will deal with His children, His sons, but He will not deal with those that are not His. We know there are two families in the Bible, John 8:44. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." Two families in the Bible. One of them is God's family, one of them is the devil's family. Every unsaved man and woman is in the devil's family.

Every saved man and woman is in God's family through a new birth that puts you from the old family into the new family. You know that. That is easy Bible 101. But the Bible says that God will not chastise or deal with someone that is not His child.

The greatest proof you have that you are God's child is when He whips you. Enjoy it. Mel Sabaca used to preach on the chastisement of God and he would always end with his mom. His mom was the disciplinarian in the family because dad was always working. There were like four or five boys and they were just something else. She would say that mom never let us get away with anything. He would say, "My mom never read the modern psychology books about if you whip your child, you will warp their psychology." She said, "My mom never read that. When she warped us, she warped us all over. It was completely and everything." He said, "We knew we were in trouble. Mama would go out in the backyard and there was a peach tree back there and she would cut off a big, big old, and we knew we were going to get it." She would say, "Come here, son." We would come over there, we never disobeyed mom. We would go over there and she would put her hand on my shoulder and she would bend us over. About that time she would get up there. You know what we learned to do? We got up and we hugged her. We put our arms around her and told her how much we loved her. She is trying to whip us, and she cannot. He said, "You know what? I learned a great lesson in my Christian life. When I need a whipping, the closer you get to God and the more you get your arms around Him and you tell Him you love Him, the harder it is for Him to whip you." That little piece of theology is about \$9 million worth. That is an old school guy who understood it. That is understanding.

The greatest proof you have that you are God's child is when He comes down and whips you. Are you going to complain about that? You know why you do? Because you do not understand it. You think He is being mean to you. You think He is being nasty. I get up here and preach a hard sermon to you, you say, "Well, I do not know what is his problem," but you are my problem. I am just telling you the truth. Do not get mad at me. If you do not like what I preach and it is in the Bible, do not get upset with me. Here is what you do: Go out on a hilltop, on a full moon, take all your clothes off, put body paint all over it, and scream at God. Leave me out of it, would you please?

Christianity in the 20th and 21st century. I believe this with all of my heart. I believe that not many people that claim to be a Christian today are really a Christian. You know why? Because I see them live their lives like the world. I see them bridge Christianity with the world. I see them doing everything that the world does. And I never see the hand of God's chastisement in their life. The greatest proof you have that you are a Christian is the fact that God will not allow you to get away with it. That is the greatest proof of His love for you. The greatest proof for you young kids here, the greatest proof that your parents love you is when they wail the fire out of you. Somebody says, "How do you raise up kids?" Wail blubber. What is that? Wail on them till they blubber. That is how you do it.

Verse nine says:

*Hebrews 12:9*

*Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?*

That is a great verse. It is a powerful verse. The last part of that verse says, "shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?" You know why? Because your chastisement can go, your sin can go so far, and your rejection of God's chastisement can go so deep, that God just has to come down and take you out of the game. That was a problem over there in 1 Corinthians 11:30 about the Lord's Supper. He says, "For this cause," coming to the Lord's Supper with unconfessed sin in your life, "many are weak, many are sick, and some sleep." God sometimes lets us go so long and so far, and we will not respond, we will not do what is right, we just keep going and going. God says, "I saved that person to give me honor and glory to win people to Christ. That person has rejected that. I put him in this game to do something for me, they are living for the devil, they are doing more damage and hurting more people than they are helping."

Let me ask you a question. You play football, can you? Who else played football here? Let me ask you a question. You are in a football game. You are a tailback. Quarterback snaps the ball, passes it off to you, you just lightly run and get clobbered. You say, "Coach, call another play." He gets you the ball, and this time you get hit, and whoops, you fumbled and dropped the ball. One more time, he gives you the ball, and you fumble the ball and drop it, and they get it and run it and score. What is the coach going to do? He is going to take you out of the game. The coach puts you in the game to help the team win. He expects you to give your all to be part of the team. When you do not pull up your load in the team, he takes you out of the game. God saves you and puts you in the game of life. He expects you to pull your load and do what you need to do. When you refuse to, you know what He will do? In some cases, take you out of the game. You betcha He will. You say, "How do you get positive about that?" You are going to heaven, man! You may feel like a fool for a little bit, but then you will see all the other fools over there, and you will have company. It is an incredible thing.

There is a great principle here found in Ecclesiastes 3:21, that really has nothing to do with our study this morning, but I will just give it to you. You can put it in there, and it says, "God the Father of all spirits."

*Ecclesiastes 3:21*

*Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?*

All spirits come from God. You want to remember that, put that in your Bible back there with Ecclesiastes. Then he says in verse 10:

*Hebrews 12:10*

*For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.*

"For they," our earthly parents, "for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure." That does not mean that they enjoyed whipping you, though they probably did. It is simply, that is an old English phrase. It means that they, just in the course of things that they did. "But he for our profit." That is one of the greatest verses that will give you understanding. The hand of God's chastisement in our life, when we will not do what is right, it is to bring us back and to restore us to break against our rebellion against His authority.

Look at verse 11, and here is the end result of a blue wound that pierces down into the heart.

*Hebrews 12:11*

*Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.*

"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous." Amen. "Nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." The chastisement of God in your life and my life is an exercise. It is an exercise in discipline. It is an exercise in obedience. It is an exercise in bringing about the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto us that God wants us to have.

Chastisement, and I get it. It says, "no chastisement will be joyous." Boy, do I understand that. I am sure you do too. Chastising is never a fun time. But in reality, if you want the bottom line truth of it, there really is no need for chastisement in our lives. That is the last resort. It simply is. God gave you a Bible. God gave you the Holy Spirit of God. God gave you a church and God gave you a preacher. They are there for a number of reasons: to help you grow, to help you get saved, to help you this, to help you that, I get it. But let me tell you one of the greatest fundamental things about a preacher, the Bible, and church, and the Holy Spirit of God.

You come here on Sunday morning. You sit in these seats. You have something wrong inside you today. Something is not right with God. I am not saying you are all looking at me like, "How did you know?" I am not talking about anybody here. I am in a general sense. You come in here with sin in your life. You come in here with problems in your life. And you do not want to deal with it. So what happens? Some old guy gets up here and he opens up the Bible and he starts to put it to you. He starts to stick you. He starts to lay out the Word of God and the Holy Spirit of God comes down and gets inside you and gets all over your head. It deals with you in every facet and every aspect of your life. Do you know why God designed it that way? God designed it that way so in this room, in this church, under this preaching, under the Word of God, that you would look deep down inside yourself and you would judge yourself and get right. So God does not have to come down and do it for you.

I am your best friend. I am. I will not lie to you up here. I will always tell you the truth. The Holy Spirit of God will take that truth and deal it into your life and He does it for a reason. You think God just up there watching somebody watch me, you walk around down here and He is saying, "I will get him today. Look what he did. Cancer! Oh, the light red. Look over here. Go through it a big summer. I T-boned you." You think God just stands up there and waits for you to screw up so He can come down and whack you? That is not your concept. You have no understanding.

God wants you here this morning. That book, me preaching, telling you the truth. He does not want me telling you how nice you are. If you walk out of here, I want, I know the peace of God that passes all understanding, but I understand the difference between that and being comfortable. I want you to have the peace of God that passes all understanding, but I do not want you comfortable to spoil.

People who do not want to go to, do not like that, they will find a church where you can get comforted. You go in there and they will tell you everything you want to hear, just the way you want to hear. He will never rock the boat. They will never ripple your feathers. They will tell you, you can do whatever you want to do. You went in there and said, "Well, I just molested 28 kids and I do not know what I am going to do about it." He would say, "It is okay. We all have our problems." No, let me tell you something. The truth is the truth. God wants to reach down inside of each of us this morning through the Word of God and the Holy Spirit of God, and He wants to point out what needs to be corrected. Doctrine, reproof, correction, then instruction in righteousness. That is what the church is for. God does not want to come down and just hurt you, whack you, take you to the woodshed. That is the last thing He wants to do, but He will do it because He loves you.

I did not like whipping my kids when they were little, but I did. It was the hardest thing in the world when they were three or four years old, and I had to take them in there and make them lay across the bed and take their pants down and them little buns there looking at you. I had to whack them things. I did not enjoy it at all. I understand the phrase, "This is going to hurt you more than it does me." And you say, "But I have got to do it, sweetheart. I have got to do it." "Oh, daddy." "I understand. I know, but you know what? I cannot let you grow up to be like so-and-so. I know you will not do it anymore, but honey, I have got to do what I have got to do." Pull them little pants down, lay across the bed. It was not joyous, was it? It was not joyous, but afterwards, afterwards, when you hold them in your arms and you explain to them why you have to do what you do, that you love them. You reinforce it. You do not just whip them and let them go on their way. It is a process. You follow the process here. How do you call yourself a child of God and understand the chastisement of God in your life when you will not carry it on to your own family after we clearly told you you need to? I did not like it. They did not like it. But look what I got today. It worked. It worked. I know how you parents raise your kids. We talk about it all the time and it worked, does it not? You do not like it either, but it worked. And it works when God is in your life and my life. That is why God gave the church and the preacher and the Bible to give you an opportunity to fix it first.

Back in Isaiah 10:3, in the Old Testament, you have what is called the day of visitation. That is the day that God comes down and deals with a nation of Israel who will not deal with what is right.

*Isaiah 10:3*

*And what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory?*

That is Israel. When God came down in 606 BC and 587 and took them into captivity, North and South. But in a practical application, the day of visitation is when God comes and deals with you and me because we will not get it right. Where are you going to go? Nobody will be able to help you. If you get a flat tire, somebody can help you. If you break your arm, somebody can help you. If somebody breaks into your house, somebody can help you. But you get a problem with God between you and Him, nobody can help you. Somebody can point you to the principles and help you, but the bottom line is, you have got to do business between Him and you.

Our verse says, "The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil: so do stripes the inward parts of the belly." As I said earlier, a blue wound is a deep wound. It is a puncture wound. It is the worst kind of wound you could get. A blue wound is a deep wound that punctures. Hebrews 4:12 says that the Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword.

*Hebrews 4:12*

*For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

Piercing, see? It will cut right down inside you. "Piercing, even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." See how it works from the Word of God? Through preaching comes conviction by God's design. From conviction comes, when you reject it, comes chastisement. It is just that simple. It pierces your heart. You hardly go to any place where you hear the Word of God preached. If you have something in your world that is not right, God is knocking on your door.

In combat, the worst wound you can get is a bayonet wound. Back in World War I, some of those bayonets were that long, the blade was that long on them. You would see those old World War I pictures where you have 5,000 guys climbing out of those trenches, going to attack the German lines and they all have rifles with bayonets on them. Nothing is scarier in this world than to get a piece of cold steel in your belly. It is one thing to get shot, but somebody coming up in the timeframe, somebody coming up and knocking you down and then you watching in slow motion as they stick you with that bayonet, that has got to be something.

Back in World War II, the only bayonet charge that ever was run was a guy by the name of Lieutenant Colonel Cole on D-Day Plus II. He was in 101st Airborne. I think he was in the 501st. They were outside of Carentan and the Germans were down there. He just got fed up with it. You know what he did? He had about 500 guys and he told them to fix bayonets and he charged those Germans and those Germans had all the firepower. They had everything in their favor, but they got up and ran. You know why? The thought of getting stuck with a puncture wound deep in your stomach with a bayonet was more than they could do. He got the Congressional Medal of Honor for it. He got killed later on in Holland in '44, but it is getting stuck with a piece of steel.

Back in the book of Judges, turn back to the book of Judges, chapter three. Here is a good story that illustrates what we are talking about today. The Bible has a bunch of them. Back in Judges, chapter three, you have the story of a guy by the name of Ehud and a guy by the name of Eglon.

Now Eglon is a king of Moab. He is a picture of the world. Ehud is the deliverer that God is sending to deliver Israel. Israel is in bondage now with Eglon, the king of Moab. They have been here for 18 years. 18 years of bondage. It is a picture in a practical sense of what you have been in bondage to in your life, maybe all your life. Now watch what happens. You are going to love this. This is how the Old Testament story in the Bible will come alive for you in the New Testament.

*Judges 3:12-25*

*And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord: and the Lord strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the Lord.*

*And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and went and smote Israel, and possessed the city of palm trees.*

*So the children of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years.*

*But when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised them up a deliverer, Ehud the son of Gera, a Benjamite, a man lefthanded: and by him the children of Israel sent a present unto Eglon the king of Moab.*

*But Ehud made him a dagger which had two edges, of a cubit length; and he did gird it under his raiment upon his right thigh.*

*And he brought the present unto Eglon king of Moab: and Eglon was a very fat man.*

*And when he had made an end to offer the present, he sent away the people that bare the present.*

*But Ehud himself turned again from the quarries that were by Gilgal, and said, I have a secret errand unto thee, O king: who said, Keep silence. And all that stood by him went out from him.*

*And Ehud came unto him; and he was sitting in a summer parlour, which he had for himself alone. And Ehud said, I have a message from God unto thee. And he arose out of his seat.*

*And Ehud put forth his left hand, and took the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly:*

*And the haft also went in after the blade; and the fat closed upon the blade, so that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly; and the dirt came out.*

*Then Ehud went forth through the porch, and shut the doors of the parlour upon him, and locked them.*

*When he was gone out, his servants came; and when they saw that, behold, the doors of the parlour were shut, they said, Surely he covereth his feet in his summer chamber.*

*And they tarried till they were ashamed: and, behold, he opened not the doors of the parlour; therefore they took a key, and opened them: and, behold, their lord was fallen down dead on the earth.*

Here is the storyline. You have one guy who represents the world. He is the king of Moabites, a picture of the world. He is oppressing for 18 years the children of Israel. It is just like you being oppressed with something in your life. What do you do? You cry out. You know what God always does? He sends you a deliverer. A deliverer shows up. I want you to see this. "But Ehad made him a dagger which had two edges, a cubit length, and he did gird it under his raiment upon his right thigh. And he brought the present unto Eglon, the king of Moab. And Eglon was a very fat man."

Put our story together here. He is not only king of Moabites, but he is a fat guy. That is a picture of being fat with the things of the world. All the things of the world. This guy is worldly in every sense of the way. He is oppressing the children of Israel. "And when he had made an end to offer the present, he sent away the people that bare the present. But he himself turned again from the quarries that were by Gilgal and said, I have a secret errand unto the king, who said, Keep silence. And all that stood by him went out for him. And Ehad came unto him, and he was sitting in a summer parlor, which he had for himself alone. And Ehad said, I have a message from God unto thee. And he rose out of his seat. And Ehad put forth his left hand and took the dagger from his right thigh and thrust it into his belly. And the haft also went in after the blade, and the fat closed upon the blade, so that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly. And the dirt came out."

Here is the picture. This guy, now remember, the Bible says that Hebrews 4:12, that the Word of God is a sharp two-edged sword. You have the king of Moab, and you have Ehad. One is a picture of the world system. One is oppressing the people of God. One is a deliverer. He gets himself a dagger. You say, "Well, the Bible says in Hebrews 4, it is a two-edged sword. A dagger is not a sword." They did not have the whole Bible back then. All they had was a couple of books. It is just a short sword. See how it works? He takes that sword and puts it under his thigh. He goes in there, just like I do. I come in here, I come down these things today. He went in there and he says, had the sword over here, and he said, "I got a message from God for you." Every Sunday morning, we do the same thing. Some of you are being oppressed by the world today. You have things in your life. And you know what? I am Ehad. I have a message from the Lord for you today. You know what he did then? He stuck him.

I will tell you something else. When he stuck him, that dagger, it went in so much that he was so fat, it went in, and that cross part of that blade got in there, and he could not pull it out. It was not like, he could not get it out. When he stabbed him, the blade stayed in. You know what that is a picture of? God's word does not return void. When I stick you on Sunday morning, you will stay stuck the rest of your life. You will never get out of conviction of the Word of God. That thing will convict you, convict you, convict you. You may live 20 years from now. You may live 30 years from now, and you remember something that some Christian said to you when you did not want to hear it, that God just took and used you. When you get stuck, the blade does not come out. He comes in there and he says, "Son, I have a message from you, from God." "What is it?" He walks over there and he tries to pull that blade out. Guy is laying on his back, hemorrhaging blood everywhere, puts his foot on his belly, tries to pull it out, and he says, "I will leave it." God says, "You betcha you will leave it. That blade is staying in there." When I stick you on Sunday

morning or some hot preacher gives it to you and sticks you wherever you hear the Word of God, it will stay in you the rest of your life.

But I will tell you the second thing it did. "Blue wound cleanses from evil." "The dirt came out." When he got stuck with that blade, the dirt came out. When you get stuck with the blue wound of God's chastisement in your life, I will tell you what it will do. What Proverbs 20:30 says, it will cleanse you of all evil and the dirt will come out. Great picture. Great picture of that. That is what the Word of God does for you. It pierces. It pierces you deep down in the belly. A blue wound that causes evil to be cleansed in our life. And your dirt comes out. When God comes down and deals with you and you get dealt with, it will expose everything in your life. You will get it out.

When you reject that, and when you will not deal with it yourself and do with it the right things that it will do, then verse 30, "so do stripes in the inward parts of the belly." Now you look at that word stripes. My Bible says, and you want to get this down now, Isaiah 53:5, talking about Christ.

*Isaiah 53:5*

*But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

You see that? Is not that the most amazing thing you ever heard in your life? You see all my bruising that I had to go through in my life, all my transgressions that I committed, all my iniquity of my life, all the chastisement I had to go through, all the stripes that I had to take, all the bruising if you had to take your transgressions, your iniquity, your chastisement, your stripes, they were all put on Him at Calvary's cross. If I did what was right with the Word of God, I would never have to experience it myself. All of those things were put on Him when I was judged as a Sinner. When I got saved, I am now His Son. It is not a question, "Are you saved or are you lost?" The question is, "Are you an obedient child of God or are you a disobedient child of God?" An obedient child of God will never experience those things. You know why? They were put on Christ at the cross. That is why He gave me the Bible He gave me. That is why He gave me the Holy Spirit. That is why He gave me and you the church. He gave us the pastors that we have here.

In 1 Corinthians 11:31 it says:

*1 Corinthians 11:31*

*For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.*

But we will not do it. If I would just judge myself, I would not have to be judged of Him through the blueness of the wound and the stripes in the inward parts of my belly through chastisement. God judges me as His Son, Sinner, Son, and Servant. As I have said many, many times today, it is not a question, "Are you a Son or not?" It is a question, "Are you an obedient Son or a disobedient one?"

## VI. The Value and Purpose of Chastisement

I will tell you what the value is of chastisement. I know we have all been out of fellowship. I have been out of fellowship, everybody. We all know we all fall with the same pattern of human nature. We get out of fellowship because we will not hear what the Word of God says and we will not do anything with it. That only gets worse with time, not better. If we do not deal with that pretty quick, it gets worse. It gets worse.

When a person gets into sin, a Christian gets into sin, you know what they stop doing? They stop thinking. They stop thinking. They do not think about the principles anymore. They do not think about church. They do not think about the Bible. They do not think about what they have lost. All they think about is what they want to do. Somebody says, "A Christian out of fellowship is out of his mind." Well, he is not out of his mind, he is just out of God's mind. That is bad enough.

So when a good whipping from God, and I mean a good one, you know what it does? It makes you think. It makes you stop and think. You see this back in Luke 15 with the story of the prodigal son. The Bible says that there were two boys there, the father was good to them and gave him everything. The one boy, he wanted to go do his own thing. So he went to his father and he said, "I want all this mine right now." And he says, "I am going to head out of here. I am going to enjoy all the pleasures of the world and out I am going to go." The Bible says he took his inheritance and he wasted it on riotous living. He winds up on a pig farm, taking care of some guy's pigs. The guy treats him terrible, will not feed him. So he has to sustain himself by eating the same stuff the pigs eat. He is languishing down there when he had all the blessings of the father over here, but he could not see it then.

You know what that chastisement did for him, of being down in the pig pen? In Luke 15:17, after he is down there and he is living in a pig pen of life with the wallow and the mud and the filth, the Bible finally says:

*Luke 15:17*

*And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!*

You will never get right with God or you will never put the things of God in your life until you first come to the place where you come to yourself. You say to yourself, "What am I doing here? What in the world am I doing here?" It makes you think. When a man takes a good whipping from God, it makes them come back to himself. It makes him think.

We will not allow the Holy Spirit of God to convict us because we are stubborn. The chastisement of God, the blue wound, the stripes will come to us and convict us and stick us. We are out there, we are thinking, "Oh, this is great." With the idea before you do it, "Oh, it is going to be wonderful. It is going to be great. I am free, I am going to do it." But when you get in a pig pen, and that is where you live, you start to think.

Five things I always thought when I got in a pig pen. It is the same five things you think. You just had everybody put them in order for you.

15. The first thing a person thinks, when they are in that pig pen and they come to themselves and the hand of God has been on them in chastisement, they say to themselves, "My God, this hurts." "Man, this hurts. Man, this really hurts." I think of Jacob back in Genesis 32. He wanted to scheme against God and do his own thing. Finally, God came down and touched the hollow of his thigh. There was nothing more painful than a bone at a joint. And it hurt. You know how God got his attention, they finally changed his name, you had to put the hurt on him. You get out there in that pig pen, you get out there living that thing and thinking it is great and all that stuff, and you wound up in that mess, and after a while you come to yourself, first thing you are going to say is, "Man, this hurts. This hurts."
16. I will tell you the second thing we all think, not only, "Oh my God, it hurts," but "Oh my God, it was not worth it." It was not worth it. What I lost for just a moment of time, a pleasure to do my own thing in lieu of what I had with God that is now gone, it was not worth it. Let me tell you something, 20 years of building a relationship and ministry and a word of God can all go out the window one night on the town. The next morning you wake up and the reality sets in and you say number two, "My God, it was not worth it."
17. When you get to that point, the third thing that we always say is, "Oh God, I will not do it again. I have learned my lesson. I cannot hurt like this anymore and I am not going to do this to the one who gave me everything, my heavenly Father. I just, I will not do it again."
18. I will tell you the number four, there have been many a GI in every war on this planet, probably from the Revolutionary War right up to every war that we have ever had. They said this one. They get themselves in a bad situation and they are a wayward son out of fellowship with God and in the army someplace or wherever, some bad thing follows them and they are in a situation that is unbelievable and looks like they are all going to die and a cry goes up. "Oh God, if I get out of this, I will never, I am done with the world. If I get out of this Lord, if you just get me out of this, I will never, I will be done with it forever."
19. Then the fifth thing, this is what God waits for. He waits for the natural process of me coming to ourselves and then we get to that point where we work through it, we realize it, we get it, understand it and then we lift our head to God. We cannot look anywhere but up and you say, "Lord, I am broken, I am busted, I am done. Oh God, please help me." At that point, God now can do something with your life.

The chastisement of God, the blue wound, the stripes, the inward parts of the belly will now begin to yield the peaceable fruit of God. Hebrews 12:11 says, "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous. Nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby." Peaceable fruit. The fruit that God wants us to all bear. The thing that He did on the cross when He judged me as a Sinner, that He took everything that I was going to have to experience and put it on Himself and the only reason I have to experience it is because I will not trust in the peaceable fruit. That comes from the workable relationship with God from the peace that passes all understanding.

Martin Luther used to say, "Keep short accounts with God." Do not let your sin, do not let the sun go down on your sin. As a Christian, the greatest friend you will ever have is a Christian or a pastor or anybody who will preach to you the truth of God's word and tell you what it really is all about. Not one who will avoid the hard issues of the Christian life. Not one who will avoid the

unpopular ones because he wants to keep everybody happy. The one who cares more about truth than he does anybody's feelings. Because they understand that the chastisement of God is an exercise in our life. It is an exercise of God coming down and doing what we need to do.

As I said, the mark of a real Christian, a mature one, will be a Christian that will understand the chastisement of God in their life and will faint not because of it. The chastisement of God will make them better. It will bring them to God, not away from God. To him and to her, the lover who loves the honeycomb and loves it all, not just the positive things but the negative things too. Because they love the book, the bitter things in the Bible are sweet unto them because they have the insight to know that it will bring the peaceable fruit of God in their life when they know that they need it.

Most kids growing up do not appreciate the discipline and the chastisement on the part of their parents. They are not mature enough yet. But as they grow and they get older and they have their own kids, they will see and understand the value of it. With kids, a biblical process is always the disciplined way to do it, to get them to understand. You are teaching them. You are giving them a teaching moment of understanding through their disobedience, why they cannot do it. I am going to tell you something. A child without Bible discipline to authority in a family will certainly grow up with no discipline to the authority of the Word of God when he gets out in life. The two are connected.

As you mature as a Christian and grow, and you work with others and you see the issues in their lives, it will help you to understand the hand of God's chastisement in your own life. It will bring you to the point where you see in others and you will understand better what God has done with you. It is easier many times when you deal with somebody else that you can see it and you see the full thing of it. The key is, can you bring that back home to yourself? You working with people is not just about you helping them, it is about helping them and what they are going through will help you better understand who you are. The same problems they have will be the same problems you have. It is really kind of hypocritical to give them the principles of the problems to solve theirs, but you will not put them in your own world.

## VII. Conclusion

So, closing out a great chapter in Proverbs chapter 20. It has been a great chapter. "The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil: so do stripes the inward parts of the belly." The hand of God's chastisement in our life, who all are partakers, Sinner, Son, and Servant. Realizing that on Calvary's cross, we were judged as a Sinner. Once you got saved, God never looks at you as a Sinner again. Your sin now is not the sin of a Sinner. Your sin now is a sin of a disobedient child because now you are His Son. So He does not deal with your sin the same way.

Once you go and He deals with you now through your confession, through preaching and teaching and your own Holy Spirit of God bringing you into conviction or His hand of chastisement coming down and dealing with you. Once you leave this life and you wind up at the Judgment Seat of Christ, it will not be about your sin. It will not be about what you did on earth as a Son. It will be about your service, your attitude of heart, not what you did, but why you did

what you did. What was the motivating factor behind your life as a Christian? It will not be how many souls you won to Christ. Why did you win any of them to Christ? It will not be how many times you went to church, but why did you go in the first place? It will not be how many times did you read through the Bible. It will be why did you read it at all? Attitude, motive behind everything that we do.

So I will leave you with that great last verse in chapter 20 about the chastisement of God in our life because every one of us are going to go through it. Maybe now you will have a better understanding that not just like getting into your Bible on Thursday night Bible study or Sunday morning or in your discipleship or your prayer groups, you will come out of there with some good stuff. Hopefully today you will come out of this class, this time together in the Bible with some good stuff, better understanding why the hand of God will be in your life because He loves you. Maybe better understand how He deals with you as His child.

Let us pray. Father God, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We do love You. Thank You for the Word of God, the message today and all that we have that You have given us. Pray, Father, Your blessings upon us and we just love You so much. Thank You for loving us. Thank You for using and loving us so much that You are willing to come down and correct us. Help us, Father, to correct it ourselves that we do not have to have the hand of God come down. But we thank You for even when we do, that You do it because You love us. Help us to understand that. Help us that Your whole goal for us is for us to yield peaceable fruit unto God. Sometimes that gets disrupted because of ourselves and we need to be reminded. When reminding will not do it, then God needs to come down and take us by the hand and remind us one on one. Thank You, Father, for today. Thank You for these good people. Thank You for this church. Thank You for the Word of God that You provided for us. We ask all this in Jesus' name for His sake we ask it. Amen. God bless you. You are dismissed this morning. I will see you Thursday night.