

**Grace Bible Church
Tree of Life
A Weekly Review
Week ending 031713
Being a soldier for the Word of God. Part 5.**

We have now established the fact that God will not stand by while members of the Christian soldiers need to repent or change their system of thinking as they go forth in the greatest battle ever fought and the greatest victory ever won. God takes stern measures to alert them to their critical situation and to encourage them to rebound and reenter the Pre-designed Plan of God (PPOG). In His perfect wisdom, God knows when and how to warn each believer.

God knows the most effective way to confront us with the fact that we are totally dependent on His grace. The Christian under discipline may doubt that God is treating him in grace, but he could not imagine how much more he would hurt if God were not acting in grace.

God punishes believers, but not because He likes to see us in pain. He is perfect. He is just. We are His children, the royal family of God, and He disciplines us and punishes us for our own benefit. By definition then, divine discipline is the sum total of punitive action taken by the justice of God in grace to correct, to punish, to encourage, to train, to motivate the believer's free will toward the PPOG. Divine discipline is for believers only, Heb 12:8, and occurs only in this life, not in eternity, Rev 21:4).

Rev 21:4, and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

In Heb 12:4-5, You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin or the old sin nature; and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, Nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him;"

In other words, in apostasy they were not successful in combating the old sin nature and its problems. Obviously from verse 4 the believers involved, the original readers of this passage, had failed and become casualties in the angelic conflict. As members of the royal family of God they were not doing too well. Often we fail and we do not do too well because we forget.

We have a way of forgetting things. And this is why Moses warned the Jews in **Deu 4:1-9, "And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I am teaching you to perform, in order that you may live and go in and take possession of the land which the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you. You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you. Your eyes have seen what the Lord has**

done in the case of Baal-peor, for all the men who followed Baal-peor, the Lord your God has destroyed them from among you. But you who held fast to the Lord your God are alive today, every one of you. See, I have taught you statutes and judgments just as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should do thus in the land where you are entering to possess it. So keep and do them, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is the Lord our God whenever we call on Him? Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law which I am setting before you today? Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things which your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons.'

Or in Deu 4:23, "So watch yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the Lord your God, which He made with you, and make for yourselves a graven image in the form of anything against which the Lord your God has commanded you."

Then in Deu 6:10-12, "Then it shall come about when the Lord your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you, great and splendid cities which you did not build, and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you shall eat and be satisfied, then watch yourself, lest you forget the Lord who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."

Deu 8:1-14, "All the commandments that I am commanding you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the Lord swore to give to your forefathers. And you shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. And He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord. Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years. Thus you are to know in your heart that the Lord your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son. Therefore, you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him. For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; a land where you shall eat food without scarcity, in which you shall not lack anything; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you. Beware lest you forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments and

His ordinances and His statutes which I am commanding you today; lest, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived in them, and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply, and all that you have multiplies, then your heart becomes proud, and you forget the Lord your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

We forget that each one of us is here on this earth by courtesy of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we are only here until He sees fit to remove us, and that can be done at any time. Whatever makes us arrogant or proud, whatever the source of our vanity, it can be removed very rapidly. So, we often forget that the source of everything that we have, the source of everything that we are, is totally dependent upon who and what Christ is. Therefore the very thought of neglecting the source of everything that is wonderful to us is ludicrous.

If you look back on your life you may regret the fact that you did not spend more time with someone you love, or that you did not understand someone who was in your life until you had enough sense and maturity to appreciate them. Whatever it is, people generally have an area of regrets. One of the things that is so important is to have few regrets in life. Few regrets means the sooner you grow up, the sooner you have capacity for life. In other words, the sooner you have maximum doctrine in your soul, the better off life will be.

Heb 12:5, and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, Nor faint when you are reproved by Him;”

So we have the phrase, And so you have forgotten, You have forgotten your lessons. The word for forgotten has a different connotation related to apostasy and fallen away and it means to forget altogether. It means a total blackout of memory on some point. It means to forget something entirely and it is like not knowing it in the first place. The verb is an obvious result of apostasy. The writer of Hebrews is back on the subject of fallen away as of this point. This causes the believer to forget Bible doctrine, forget Jesus Christ, forget grace, forget everything that is important, and get involved in an entirely new thought pattern. This is when the soul undergoes a phenomenal change in apostasy. The things you ought to remember you forget and the things you ought to forget you remember.

As a member of the royal family of God you become petty, vindictive, implacable, a frantic search for happiness type, all of the things whereby you are no longer worthwhile in life.

Pro 3:11-12, My son, do not reject the discipline of the Lord, Or loathe His reproof, For whom the Lord loves He reproveth, Even as a father, the son in whom he delights.

David was teaching his son doctrine; and he says in effect do not refuse, reject, to despise, or melt away when the Lord reproveth. Hence, to melt away in the sense of rejecting the purpose of divine discipline. Discipline is designed to put us back on the road to glory. Ultimately discipline is always designed to improve, to better a situation, to reach an objective, and discipline is really a matter of the soul. Children are tender when they are young, they have

tender souls, and that is the time when discipline pays off. Discipline is designed to put the royal family on the road to glory. This is a reference to the various stages of discipline in reversionism, the warning stage, the intensive stage, the dying stage.

Each stage is designed to warn the believer that he is off of the road to glory. Each stage is designed to warn the believer of his apostate status and to motivate a change of attitude toward doctrine, the use of rebound, and the daily function of PMA of BD.

Pro 3:11-12, My son, do not reject the discipline of the Lord, Or loathe His reproof, For whom the Lord loves He reproveth, Even as a father, the son in whom he delights.

Most people think that when parents are strict when they are unkind. They think that those who are permissive are somehow loving. A permissive parent is stupid and unloving. Now, the word love is the qal imperfect which means that God keeps on loving us. He always will love us. He loves us in reversionism, He loves us in supergrace. The only difference is that His love manifests itself in different ways toward the individual. He loves you by blessing you in supergrace. He loves you by discipline and punishment in apostasy but the love is still there.

Pro 3:12, For whom the Lord loves He reproveth, Even as a father, the son in whom he delights.

The son is growing up and now the father handles the discipline. The father loves his son but he disciplines his son, and he prepares him for life by doing so. The father can do this for his son and can prepare him for life and this means discipline.

Heb 12:6-15, For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, And He scourges every son whom He receives. It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed. Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;

Divine discipline is a warning that the believer is outside the boundaries of God's plan. Just as a football game is played inside the boundaries of the playing field, so the plan of God must be executed within the God's boundaries or the PPOG.

2Jo 1:9, No one has fellowship with God who keeps advancing out-of-bounds and does not remain on the playing field through the doctrine of Christ. He who resides in it [PPOG] keeps on having fellowship both with the Father and with the Son.

Just as the referee blows a whistle when the ball-carrier steps out of bounds, so God blows a whistle on us and administers divine discipline when we live outside the PPOG for any length of time. When a believer cuts off his fellowship with God through sin and remains in the cosmic system, God in His grace must deal with him as a child. Bible doctrine has been ignored so God must get the believer's attention through pain.

Divine discipline from the Lord is part of parental training in the royal family of God. The premise in this passage in comparing divine discipline with child rearing in the home is that, except for the humanity of Jesus Christ, there is no such thing as a perfect child. Some children are unquestionably better behaved and more responsive to instruction than others, but every child needs training so that eventually he will be able to function in an adult society. Parents try to instill authority orientation in their children. They should because anyone who leaves home without authority orientation makes himself a monster who will manufacture misery for himself and others under the law of volitional responsibility.

On the spiritual side of the analogy, there is no such thing as sinless perfection in this life, again with the exception of Christ's impeccable humanity. As long as any believer lives in his mortal body, in which the old sin nature resides, he will continue to sin. As he matures spiritually, he will sin less frequently and perhaps will commit different categories of sin, but periodically he will succumb to temptation and enter the cosmic system.

If the believer remains in the cosmic system, his thinking loses touch with the reality of God's plan. Under prolonged cosmic influence, his arrogance becomes antagonism toward God and therefore he multiplies his own unhappiness and incurs divine discipline. And so like parental training, divine discipline is designed to inculcate humility, which is orientation to reality and authority. Only the humble believer is teachable, Psa 25:8:9. He desires to understand how he fits in the over-all scheme of God's grace. And only with humility can anyone be objective and responsive to the authority of Bible doctrine.

Although self-evaluation when accompanied by arrogance rapidly slips into subjectivity, we have the responsibility to analyze our lives. We should be first to recognize our own weaknesses.

1Co 11:31, But if we judged ourselves rightly, we should not be judged.

If we do not, divine discipline enforces humility on us, teaching us to see ourselves as we really are in relation to God and His marvelous plan. The very fact that we receive discipline from God tells us we are divorced from reality and that God is bringing us back to grace--oriented objectivity. And from that solid footing we can rebound and resume our spiritual growth. Therefore, because of corrective discipline, we need to endure it.

Heb 12:7, It is for discipline that you endure;

This is a command to endure suffering inside the PPOG. In other words, rebound! And after rebound, keep applying doctrine! So Hebrews 12 continues with an explanation of divine discipline in terms of parents and children. The entire passage should be cited as documentation of God's magnificent purpose in disciplining His own.

There are three different categories of divine discipline;

1. Warning discipline
2. Intensive discipline
3. Dying discipline

God is never inconsistent in administering discipline: His punishment is always appropriate to the individual in question. As Peter said in **Act 10:34, I most certainly understand that God is not one to show partiality,**

Col 3:25, For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality.

From His perfect divine justice, all discipline not only fits the violation but also matches the believer's receptivity and the ability to lead him to rebound and recovery. When the believer does not use rebound, these three categories of discipline are progressive. Mild discipline gives way to more and more severe discipline if the believer fails to respond. The believer who refuses to live in the PPOG receives warning discipline, added to the misery he has already created for himself under the law of volitional responsibility.

He has isolated himself from fellowship with God and he has shut Christ out of his thoughts. However, the combination of warning discipline and self-induced misery adds up to a significant shock. Because he has not yet degenerated into the later stages of negative volition, this believer is still sensitive to the truth.

He can still profit from this degree of discipline so that God does not have to proceed to the next stage of punitive suffering. He can still hear the knocking on the door as it were. God can catch his attention with relatively mild suffering. However, if the believer ignores or rejects divine warnings, he eventually requires intensive discipline.

By habitual negative volition he has dulled his sensitivity to truth; warning discipline is no longer sufficient. God still has a marvelous plan for blessing this cosmic believer, but God's plan can be executed only in the power of the filling of the Spirit. No believer who refuses to submit to a pastor-teacher can ever be filled with the Spirit because they are living in sin from refusal to submit. However, God continues to support him with logistical grace, keeping him alive so that he might return to God's plan for his life.

1. The Christian way of Life is a supernatural way of life. As such it requires a supernatural dynamics for its execution (Phi 2:12-13).

2. The filling of the Holy Spirit is the second of the ten problem solving devices found in the Word of God, and solves the problem of our inability as a frail man to serve God, by empowering the believer for the fulfillment of the Christian way of life.

3. The filling of the Spirit may be defined as the Holy Spirit's control of the believer's soul. The Spirit's control of the believer's soul is the essence of Christian spirituality.

4. The filling of the Spirit, as an experiential reality in life, must be distinguished from other ministries of the Holy Spirit, such as the baptism of the Spirit (1Co 12:13), regeneration (Titus 3:56), the indwelling of the Spirit (John 14:16-17), and the seal of the Spirit (Eph 1:13).

5. The filling of the Spirit also solves the problems with the believer's lifestyle (e.g., legalism), as attempting to execute the spiritual life or Christian service in the energy of the flesh.

6. The filling of the Holy Spirit involves access to the power of God for the Christian life.

7. The filling of the Spirit is essential for spiritual combat, and for the prevention of satanic influence of the soul (Eph 6:10-12), and, when coupled with the "Main Line of Resistance," called "the full armor from God," is sufficient to win the battle over satanic influences.

If Eph 5:18 was not in the Book of Ephesians the book of Ephesians could never be fulfilled? You would never be able to fulfill **Eph 2:10, For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.**

Eph 4:24-32, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity. Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

Think of it, if this one verse, Eph 5:18 was deleted from this book everything in it would be legalistic. If this one verse was removed you would be the great engine, the great vehicle described in chapters 1 to 3, you would still have your road map in chapters 4, 5, and 6 but you wouldn't have any fuel to get you going anywhere. You'd be functioning completely in the flesh apart from this beautiful statement in chapter 5 verse 18, **Be filled with the Spirit.** That is the heart of the whole matter. That is the energy of the worthy walk. That is the key to living the Christian life. That's at the bottom of all of it; you can never walk in humility,

you can never walk in unity, you can never walk different that the world walks, you can never walk in the light, you can never walk in love, and you can never walk in wisdom unless you are energized by the Spirit of God.

The life of God in the soul of man is the only thing that can produce that kind of living. And so this is the heart of the matter in verse 18, it opens up to us horizons of tremendous understanding. And by the way I guess we'd have to say that ah, if you don't obey chapter 5 verse 18 you're the biggest fool of all.

In verse 15 it says, **See that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise.** And the biggest fool of all would be the one who tried to walk a humble oneness, a unique kind of life, walk in love, walk in light, walk in wisdom, fulfill all the will of God and do it in the flesh, that's the biggest fool of all. A Christian must do it in the power of the Holy Spirit. And so in our subject of the Spiritual Warfare and the Art of War we begin by dealing with The Spiritual Transformation Which Cleans Out The soul of the Onward Christian soldier. All of us need to accept the fact that we have all failed and have developed Garbage in the Soul.

2Co 4:7, But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of god and not from ourselves;

Notice that this power is of God, not of ourselves, however, also note that this power is found inside of our earthen vessels or human body. And this power comes from epignosis or metabolized doctrine, Heb 4:12.