

Why And When Does God Punish Us?

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

Date: 18 June 2017

Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

- [0 : 0 0] Good morning, everybody. This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.
- If any kids want to sing, they're welcome. Come join me. This is the day that the Lord has made.
- Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.
- Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.
- Great job, girls. Hi. I'm Linda Barzikowski. I'm a certified lay minister and lay leader of the 1115 service. If this is your first time here, be sure to get a welcome bag from the connection site or the welcome and information center.
- [1 : 1 3] I hope everyone will fill out their friendship card that you find in the bulletin. If you have any updated information, please be sure to fill out the card with your address and phone number.
- If you'd like to receive the newsletter, we ask that you do the same. On the back, there's a section for prayer requests, blessings, or notes to the staff. If you'd like them to stay confidential, we can do that too.
- We hope that you enjoy the service and have a wonderful day. Good. Well, we are glad to have you here. There are a couple opportunities on our clipboards for ministries this morning.
- One is to help with summer Sunday school. Now, the sheets may have the Saturday night sheet on top, so there's one underneath for the Sunday, and you can switch them if you'd like to. We would love to have some help if you'd like to take an occasional opportunity to help with that.
- Also, we're having a rummage sale in Niagara Falls, and so we're going to be collecting things in the back of the sanctuary this week, and then we're asking people to help take you down Saturday morning.
- [2 : 1 6] So that's going to be coming up this week as well. We have on our clipboards an opportunity to sign up for our picnic next week. We have a potluck picnic after service, and we have one worship service.
- Anybody know what time it is? Wow, you guys are good. You know, we'll see who shows up at nine, but anyways, they can help set things up and everything right for a picnic.
- And the youth will be washing cars right after that, so pray for good weather. Yes, so we'll be washing cars. We'll be eating food. We'll be having a good time and some games for the kids.
- So we do call all those to your attention, and we also call our hearts and our souls to the Lord in prayer. Dear God in heaven, bless us. Gather with us. Fill us with your Holy Spirit.
- Touch us in this place that we might experience the living God in our hearts, our minds, our souls, and in all that we do. For it's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

- [3 : 12] I'd like to invite you all to stand if you're able as we sing together, trust and obey. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
- Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
- Amen. Amen. When we walk with the Lord in the light of his word, what a glory he sheds on his way.
- While we do his good will, he abides with us still, and with all who will trust and obey.
- Trust and obey. Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.
- [4 : 13] Not a burden we bear. Not a burden we bear. Not a sorrow we share. But our toil he doth richly repay.
- Not a grief or a loss. Not a frown or a cross. But is blessed if we trust and obey.
- Trust and obey. Trust and obey. For there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.
- But we never can prove the delights of his love until all on the altar we lay.
- For the favor he shows. For the favor he shows and the joy he bestows are for those who will trust and obey.
- [5 : 16] Trust and obey. Trust and obey. Trust and obey. For there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.
- The Lord be with you. Take a moment, if you will, and greet your neighbor with the peace of the spirit. Well, I'm going to invite the kids to come up and join me if any kids want to come on down.
- I mean the couple there that you didn't know, I don't know. Yeah. Any kids want to come on up? Come on up now. Come on up now.
- Looks like a chocolate bar? You think you'd want to eat that? No, because what is it? It's not chocolate. Boy, oh boy, life has changed, hasn't it?
- That's a bar of soap. Did you know that? Yeah. Would you want to eat it now? No, not so much. When we were kids, if we said the wrong words, sometimes our parents would threaten to wash our mouth out with soap.
- [6 : 46] Yuck. I don't know if they ever did it. I'm trying to remember if they did. If we did, they did it once, boy. We never did it again. Right? Because would you want to eat soap?
- Do you think they did that because they didn't like us? They didn't want us to look bad. You know, because when people say the wrong words, it makes them look like they're not very smart. They're not very able to control themselves.
- And so they just wanted to help us out to be better off in life. That's what they did. You know, when parents take away your toys or when they make you go to bed early or things like that, they're just trying to get you to be the right people that you need to be and be healthy.
- They're not trying to hurt you. That's what God does to us. God kind of nudges us in the right direction from time to time to make sure that our lives are good. Okay?
- So I know sometimes it doesn't feel good, but that doesn't mean that they don't mean it for good because they do. What are you guys thankful for? You want to share something? Raise your hand if you do. George.
- [7 : 45] Anybody else? Are we thankful for our fathers today? Yeah? Because it's Father's Day? Yeah?

Yeah? Family friends. Okay. Lord, we do thank you for all the blessings you give to us. We even thank you for your discipline. And we pray that you'll bless our parents, especially our fathers today.

You'll bless our friends and our families and all the good things in our lives. Be with us now and always. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Okay, you guys can all go to church school. The kids are welcome to go out to church school now if they'd like to.

I'd like to. Yes, my mother used soap.

Anyway, it's a wonderful day to praise the Lord. Amen? Amen. You know, the love of God that comes into the lives of our own hearts and our own families, we take that love and we share it wherever we go, right?

[8 : 52] Because God has blessed us with such abundant blessings, we can be a blessing to other people. That's called being the church. Yeah? Not so we can just enjoy it for ourselves, but so that we can share it with everyone, wherever we go, all those people who need to hear about Jesus, all those people who need to be touched by God's love.

Because we have God's love in our hearts. As the family of God, we can touch the hearts of others. Let's worship God with our gifts, tithes and offerings, as an offering to God of ourselves, so that we can touch the world.

Let's worship God with our gifts, and we can touch the world. Let's worship God with our gifts, and we can touch the world. Allow us to worship God with our gifts, and if we can touch the faith to flow with some ■■■■■x and dignity.

The project starts there in little history, and the word of God common sanctifies His presence. Thank you.

Thank you.

[10 : 51] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Dear Heavenly Father we come before you this morning to worship you, to give you thanks and praise for all that you have blessed us with in our lives for the ability to be a blessing to others.

[13 : 15] We ask that you would accept this offering, Lord God, and the offering of all the gifts that you have poured out into our lives. Give us wisdom to know how to use them for the furtherance of your kingdom.

Help us, Lord, to know what to do as we give you all the praise and thanks and glory. In Jesus' name, amen.

Please be seated. We wanted to let you know in terms of prayers and lifting folks up, Gidget Hughes, her dad had a stroke and fell from a ladder and broke his hip.

So she's on the West Coast, and Pastor Tom was going to text her this morning to see how things are going, but realized that she's like three hours behind us. It's six o'clock in the morning there. So we're not going to text her just yet, but we are checking up on her to make sure how things are going with her dad.

So we'd like to keep her dad in our prayers and her whole family. Kathy Dick is going to be having surgery on Tuesday, and we want to lift her up and keep her in our prayers. Dale McKenzie is still in the hospital, but is possibly coming home today and is in need of our prayers for some ongoing concerns.

[14 : 31] And we want to lift up the family of Shirley Jones, who passed away this week. Shirley was the stepmother of Kathy Hill and grandmother of Terry Remillard and Tracy Finnecke, so we want to keep those folks lifted up and in our prayers this morning.

With these concerns and those that are on your heart, you can join me at the rail or from your seats as we turn to the Lord in prayer. Heavenly Father, what a joy it is that we are able to come before you and like Jesus, call you Abba, Father.

Father, you love us with a perfect love, the kind of love that no human being can possibly begin to pour out.

Help us to learn more of your love so that we might learn to love one another as you love us. We pray, Lord God, for all those who have been fathers to us, who are fathers to us now.

Whoever they might be, those who have held us up and encouraged us, been an example of Christ-likeness for us as Jesus was the perfect representation of you.

[16 : 17] for all people. Thank you, Lord, for all that they have given us, for all that you have done for us.

Lord God, we lift up now all of those who are sick and infirm, who have had surgeries and are facing surgeries.

We have named some. You know who the rest are, Lord. We just pray in Jesus' name that you would be with them.

Touch them with your healing power. Make them whole from the tops of their heads to the soles of their feet. Touch them, Lord, in every way that you know they most need.

Draw them to become closer to you than ever before. To rely on you more than they rely on any human thing. Lord, we pray for those who are grieving losses.

[17 : 30] Some of those losses have come suddenly, completely unexpectedly. Some of them have been a long time in coming and may even be something of a relief.

But, Father, in all cases, there is a feeling of loss and a feeling of pain and a feeling of wishing that those people were still in our lives.

help us to know that they are. That all of those things that they have done in our lives, all of those ways they have been who they were to us, continues on in us.

Help us, Lord, to have the hope of eternal life. Lord God, we just lift up all of those folks and those situations, those circumstances that are in our hearts that have gone unspoken.

Now, Lord, we lift up all of those circumstances in our culture, in our world, where people have gone astray from you, where people are seeking to do what they think is best rather than what you know is best for all of our communities, for all of our world.

[19 : 23] Help us, Lord, to turn back to you. Give each one a heart to seek after you, Lord God. Take hearts of stone and make them hearts of flesh.

And give us, as your church, the ability to shine your light wherever we go. Help us, Lord, to be able to impact the lives of those people who need to be turned toward you.

Father, we pray as we continue in our worship, as we hear your words spoken, as we sing songs of praise, as we continue in prayer, as we receive holy communion.

Transform us, Lord God, by those means. Amen. Make us able to submit to you and to be the example you've called us to be.

To tell people about Jesus. Be with Pastor Tom as he delivers the message you have given him for us today.

[20 : 36] Give us eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts and minds to understand and receive all that you have for us, Lord God. Let our worship bless you and help us to carry everything that we receive from you this day out into the world.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Shall we hear from the word of the Lord? Amen. Happy Father's Day.

Our reading this morning is from Hebrews chapter 12, verses 4 through 15. In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says, My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline and do not lose heart when he rebukes you because the Lord disciplines the ones he loves and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.

Endure hardship as discipline. God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? If you are not disciplined and everyone undergoes discipline, then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all.

[22 : 31] Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the father of spirits and live?

They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best, but God disciplines us for our good in order that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful.

Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. Make level paths for your feet so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.

Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy. Without holiness, no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.

This is the word of the Lord. Live in dread and fear.

[23 : 46] Be sensible. Or just dance. I told Adrian when I came in this morning, I wore a sport jacket just so that I could tell all the guys that are wearing a sport jacket you have my permission to take them off.

It's hot outside. You know, in the way we look at God, we sometimes think that God is harsh and hurtful and wants to punish us and cause us pain.

And so we got a question in this sermon series that asked why and when does God punish us? By the way, if we're not getting to your question, there's yellow cards as you come into the sanctuary.

You can write your question on those cards and drop them in the basket out there and we'll get to them July 4th weekend. That weekend I'm going to preach a different sermon every single time and I'll just draw the cards out.

Now, I'm not looking at the cards in advance but Pastor Sherry is so there won't be any inappropriate ones and so you don't repeat the questions that I'm answering now.

[24 : 51] So those I'll just say look at sermon number five on the list. But we do encourage you to turn in a question. It'll be interesting to see what I'm going to have to face when I pull them out of the hat.

Why and when does God punish us? And how can we tell the difference between God doing something and stuff that just happens in our world because there's a lot of pain in our broken world.

We don't live in a perfect world. We live in a world with sin. We live in a world where people do things that are hurtful to each other. I read just the other day some woman is walking down the road in Grand Island and someone hit her with the car and drove away.

How can people hurt and be hateful to each other? Because sin has caused brokenness in this world and some of the things that happen to us are simply the reality of life.

Some of it's a storm or a hurricane or because we live in the wrong place at the wrong time. Some of it's caused by the incompetence of others. Jesus was talking to some people in the Bible and talking about a tower that had fallen on people and he said those 18 who died when the tower of Siloam fell on them do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem?

[26 : 10] He says no. But unless you repent you too will all perish. It's interesting how Jesus always has a call to repent.

The tower fell because somebody built it poorly probably to save a few dollars and make a little more on their contract and their greed caused the death of 18 people.

Not sin not because they did something wrong. God is not going to kill people to try and change their behavior. God's goal is not to hurt us to the point that we no longer exist to change what we're about.

God is trying to make our life good. Problem is we have a messed up definition for the word good. God is good and all the time but sin is not good.

It's never good. It's never helpful. It's never something that will make our lives better off. Some people think that if they could just get an opportunity to get out there and do all that sinful stuff life would be better.

[27 : 21] Even Sally said so. I don't even get weekends off. Come on. I read about one woman who wrote her vows for her marriage and she said I will be faithful to you for 364 days a year.

I will be the perfect wife but one day a year I just want to go nuts and live like I'm not married. Sin is never good. It's always destructive.

It's not okay if we're good most of the time it hurts us even when we do things wrong some of the times. We've defined good as pleasure and liberty.

In our culture we've decided that if it's painful or if it's restrictive it somehow is wrong. Yet this passage talks to us about things that are not always something that will feel good.

No discipline seems pleasant at the time but painful. Later on however it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

[28 : 36] Pleasure and liberty are not always beneficial. Sometimes they're harmful to us. They lead us in the wrong direction in the wrong place and cause us to have a life filled with hurt and with struggle.

But we've made the pursuit of pleasure the goal of life. life and we become a culture that views boundaries as somehow wrong.

If we can't do whatever we want wherever we want however we want it's not fair. In 1 John chapter 3 it says everyone who sins breaks the law.

In fact sin is lawlessness. Sin is no boundaries. But you know that God appeared so that he might take away our sins.

And in him there is no sin. Because God is good. And all the time God is the definition of goodness.

[29 : 41] So the truth is it's not our pleasure that's good. It could be good or it could be bad. It's not the boundaries that are good. They could be good or they could be bad.

God is good. good is defined by God himself. And once we realize that we realize that whatever God is doing is designed to bring us to what will be good for our lives for our worlds for our nation.

What we sometimes perceive as punishment is simply discipline. In verse 5 it refers to God as our father.

Our heavenly father. He disciplines us to encourage a positive change. Discipline is to help us.

To help us grow and become stronger in our lives. Our fathers it says in verse 10 disciplined us for a little while where they thought best. But God disciplines us for our good.

[30 : 50] And in order that we might share in his holiness because his holiness is good for us. When I grew up my father disciplined me.

Now I remember back in that day people used a lot of things for discipline. Do you remember this? Some people would cut a branch off and whack their kids with it. There were mothers that for some reason seemed to think a spoon was a good thing to whack their kids with.

occasionally I would catch a crutch or a ruler or a belt people would say. I have to tell you my father just simply used his hand which was the size of a shovel and that was sufficient.

My father would come home from work. After working a long day he'd come in the door, he'd kiss my mother, he'd ask what was for dinner and he'd say who needs to get whacked.

discipline. Discipline was designed and intended not to hurt us but to guide us so we would start doing things that would be better for our lives.

[31 : 58] One day we went to visit Niagara Falls. Have any of you ever been to Niagara Falls? It's just around the corner here. I know we don't go to it very much, right? Do you remember going to the falls and you go right up to where there's like a railing, just like a little railing between you and the falls?

As a kid I remember looking in there and going there's money in that water. All I got to do is crawl under this little railing, go out and just get some of that money, right? I got about a foot past that railing and my dad grabbed hold of me.

I never went past that railing again. He didn't do it to hurt me. I didn't understand that the boundaries were there to keep me safe.

Discipline provides us with guidance. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the father of spirits and live?

God doesn't punish us. He disciplines us as believers. If you're following and believing in God, his intention is never to hurt you, but he may give you a little bit of a nudge in the right direction.

[33 : 21] Because unfortunately, without boundaries, without rules, we hurt ourselves. I went for ice cream the other day with my wife. I think it was at Dairy Queen.

I'm not sure. But you know how they ask you small, medium, and large? They want to get you to buy a medium. We all say medium. Don't we all say medium? I'll take a medium.

So I get this medium cone, which is this high. I mean, you know, this thing was like huge. And I said, this is huge. And my wife said, well, you can put some in my cup. I said, no. It's mine.

I'm eating it all. But you see, that wasn't good for me. That wasn't healthy. My wife was right. Except I don't know that she needed to eat that ice cream any more than I did.

The boundaries are there to help us and to keep us in healthier lives. Is it not interesting that as our culture seems to be turning away from God and turning to a culture without limits, without boundaries, without rules, we have more obesity, more sickness, more anger and hurt and lying and hatred and broken relationships.

[34 : 40] A world without boundaries and a world without rules doesn't make our lives happier in the long run. You may have a short time feeling of pleasure, but you're going to have a long-term life of pain.

God doesn't want you to hurt. He wants you to become stronger. Enduring hardship as discipline, God is training you as children. God is trying to make us stronger.

God is trying to cause us to avoid hardship. Discipline comes at a cost. My son, he says, do not make light of the Lord's discipline and do not lose heart when he rebukes you because God is doing that that we might feel stronger, that we might become better, that we might be healthier.

Back in verse 11, it even talks about our own health. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

So strengthen your feeble arms flesh and weak knees. No pain, no gain. How many of you have ever been to the gym?

[36 : 03] How many of you have ever worked out? How many of you have ever exercised? I find if I don't move this body and do something with it, the next time I try, it hurts more. So it may feel good to just sit and do nothing for a little while, but after a while we end up losing.

So what God does with believers is He disciplines them. He doesn't try to punish them. He doesn't try to hurt them. He's trying to correct them. For people who don't follow God, for people who have rejected God, they're rejecting goodness because God is good and all the time.

God is the definition of good. And so when somebody turns their back on God, they're not only turning their back on God, they're turning their back on what is good.

God loves His children. He disciplines those He loves. It says He chastens everyone, accepts them as His children. But not everyone loves God as a loving Father.

By the way, mothers, I'm not leaving you out. It's Father's Day, right? Just so you understand that. I'm not being sexist and a jerk. It's just His Father's Day, right? In John chapter 3, it says to us, this is the verdict.

[37 : 30] Light has come into the world, but people love darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. And so they rejected the light.

They rejected God. They rejected what is good. God. There's a story in the Bible in chapter 15 of Luke. It starts out saying there was a man who had two sons.

The younger one said to his father, Father, give me my share of the estate. So he divided his property between them. The son wanted his father dead actually is the way it's interpreted if you read the original Greek.

I wish you were dead so I had my money now. The father said if that's all I mean to you, here it is. Take it.

It says the next day he packed up everything he had, he took the money, and he went off to some far and distant country and engaged in what they said was wild living.

[38 : 31] It doesn't get specific, just wild living. You can use your imagination for what that means or what it would mean to you. When people withdraw from God, goodness is removed from them.

When they refuse to have anything to do with God who is the definition of goodness, they also refuse to have anything to do with goodness. So this young man went to what he thought would be pleasurable, what he thought had been missing, what he thought had been withheld from him by the boundaries that his father had set for his health, and lived wildly, no boundaries, no rules.

That doesn't lead to blessing. In the end, it leads to pain. People fall deeper into sin, and sin, whether you realize it or not, is destructive.

It's brokenness. It's withdrawing from God. It's walking away from goodness. In the end, your life will not be good if you fill it up with bad. Do you follow this? Your life cannot be healthy if you fill it up with sin.

God allows it. We call it free will, being able to choose, because God could make us do what he wants, but he's made us in his image, and so he's made us free to choose even to reject him.

[40 : 01] God hopes that maybe if things get so bad, if people, what we call hit rock bottom, maybe they'll turn around and change.

But if they don't, in the end, God has no choice. People think that God punishes folks by sending them to hell. God doesn't send anyone to hell.

People choose not to go to glory. people choose not to live into that goodness, and if they're going to fill their lives, their souls, their hearts, their world with brokenness and sin and pain and destructive attitudes and feelings, how can God allow that to be in an eternity full with peace and love and joy and hope?

And so God excludes him on the day of judgment. You can't be with what's good because you're filled with bad.

It says in the book of Revelation, they'll be thrown into a lake of fire. I like to believe that the lake of fire is simply their end. They no longer exist.

[41 : 15] because they've excluded themselves from goodness by turning their back on God. They have chosen that they don't want to live in that joy and wonder and eternal perfection and blessing.

Without God, without his love and grace, there's nothing good in our lives. It says in this chapter in verse 15, we end up with a bitter, bitter life.

We have a lot of people right now living bitter lives. We have worlds of people turning away from God. We have families that are being torn asunder.

We have children raised without fathers and nowadays raised without mothers, raised without parents because they don't care anymore.

it's a destructive, painful thing when we take God out of our lives and we end up living in brokenness.

[42 : 25] You want to know how to fix all this struggle and pain? Bring God back into your life one heart and soul at a time.

the worst pain of all is that it's a choice to live without God, to live without goodness.

When I would correct my daughter when she was young, one of the things I like to do, not like to do, but I would do with her, is I'd go into her room and I'd take her toys and stick them in a bag and I'd say, these are going to disappear.

You won't see your toys. They're going away. I had places to hide them where she'd never find them. Don't do that, Dad.

Sometimes it would change your behavior. Sometimes it wouldn't. I used to send her to her room as punishment. Anybody ever do that? Nowadays, you're sending them to where all the toys are.

[43 : 30] They love to go to their room. I'd send her to her room and I'd say, you can come down from there as soon as you're ready to behave. She'd stay up there for hours. Because we don't want to be disciplined by God.

And so we turn away from God just like the prodigal son who went off in wild living until everything he had was gone. And he had to go to work for a local pig farmer.

And he was so hungry, he wanted to eat the pig food. food. And that's what it is when we walk away from God little by little. The image of God in us disappears until there's nothing but brokenness and hunger and pain.

And he said to himself, how many of my father's hired servants have food to spare? Here I am starving to death.

This makes no sense. I could go back and work for my dad. I'd be better off to work for dad than to work for the pig farmer who wants me to eat this slop.

[44 : 41] There's my food. And so he turned his life around. What do we call that? To repent. To repent. He changed the direction of his life from going towards brokenness and pain to going towards goodness and love.

Have you ever asked God to punish you? Anybody here ever ask God to punish you? Whenever you make an agreement with God, if you don't keep it, you're asking God to punish you.

I have made a number of agreements with God, some of them very sacred like wedding vows or baptismal vows or things like that. there has been in my life an understanding God and I have that I have agreed that I will take a certain amount of time and I will devote it to God before I come to worship.

And one time I broke that agreement. It's very clear with God and I what I'm supposed to do and I broke that agreement. It may not seem like much to you, but it was my agreement with God.

And I said, God, you know, this is serious stuff because I'm supposed to do what you've asked me to do and I made an agreement with you and I broke it, so I need to be punished.

[46 : 06] I said, but tomorrow's worship. So the people of the church are going to come and you can't not have them come to church because that's not punishing me, that's punishing them. I know I'll feel depressed because none of you are here smiling and all that and I like to see you all.

But don't do it that way. You've got to come up with something that doesn't hurt the people of the church but affects me. So that next day, I got up and I preached three sermons and the entire congregation, every single person, you could see the fire of the Holy Spirit in them.

They were so excited and so transformed by God, everybody in the place felt it except me. I'm like, what? What?

This isn't fair. Huh? How come? What about me? Sometimes we need, we need a little discipline.

It causes us to realize how much God really loves us because discipline is an act of love. The Lord disciplines the one that he loves.

[47 : 14] He chastens everyone he accepts as his child. discipline is love even when we don't like it.

Even when it comes from our fathers. Well, you'll never hear saying this. I don't care how late you stay out.

Stay out as late as you want. You want to borrow the new car? You want to borrow my credit card? Kids today, they really have it rough. I have no idea where we are or where we're going. I mean, when I was their age, life was easy.

Super easy. Why haven't you gotten a tattoo yet? How come you don't have any piercings yet? Yep, we're lost. We are completely lost. Ew, sports. Just do whatever the mechanic says to do.

Vehicle maintenance is completely overrated. Look, whatever the mechanic is asking, just pay him. Pay him whatever he wants. I wish they had soap roppers at night. I like that boy.

[48 : 18] You should date him. You should date him immediately. What about the creepy guy with the motorcycle? He's cute. Yeah, sure. Spring break in Tahiti sounds fun. Hey, make sure you get all your video games done before you start your homework.

You don't have to pass all your classes. What? You have a project due tomorrow and you've known about it for four weeks and you haven't started yet? Sweet! Doesn't anybody want to know if we're there yet?

Remember, if you need anything between midnight and 4am, please come wake me up. Hey, I'm on the phone. Could you bring the baby over and let him climb all over me? Hey! Hey!

Can you please turn that music up? Well, we just stopped for lunch ten minutes ago, but yeah, let's stop again. I never have trouble with my toddler. I never have trouble with my teenagers.

I never have trouble with my adult children. You know, she's right. We are ruining her life. You see, sometimes we don't like what's good for us, but we need to recognize the need for it because God is good and all the time, so he's not doing something to hurt us.

[49 : 31] He's doing something to help us. Our prodigal turned around and headed back home, and he went up to see his father, but while he was still a long way off, a long way off, his father had gone down the road to meet him, and his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him, he ran to his son, threw his arms around him, and kissed him.

God offers us a way back. God is not a hurtful parent that enjoys punishment. That's abusive. God is a loving parent that wants to find a way to make our lives good, make our lives healthy, which in the long run will make us happy.

God loves us. And the purpose of life is to grow closer to that God who loves us so that we can gain real goodness, not artificial goodness, not a quick, happy high, not an opportunity to do whatever we want, but to do what's really good.

God wants to do it. Did you notice that the father didn't chase the prodigal down? You know, if you chase a runaway, you know what they do?

They run farther. If he would wandered off like the little lost sheep, that'd be different. But God waits for us to make a decision to turn back to him.

[51 : 11] And then when he does, he embraces us and loves us. In verse 10 of this passage, it says, fathers discipline us for a little while as they think best, but God disciplines us for good in order that we might share in his holiness.

The goal for God is that we might share in a relationship with God that's loving. young. My father did spank me when I was young.

I believe I understand that that's against the rules now. I'm not sure. You'll have to decide on that. He didn't too often sit me in a corner in a chair like some of you get done.

But you know, when I got to be about 23, he stopped doing that. Some of us take a little longer to learn than others. Because the goal for my father was not to see whether or not he could still outdo me as a man.

The goal was to change our relationships with each other. As Snoopy would show us, that's what God wants to be with us.

[52 : 34] When I got older, my dad didn't discipline me anymore. Sometimes we argued. I remember one argument we had where he said, if you don't want to listen to what I have to say, you can get out of my house.

And I started leaving, and then we were at the cottage, which we owned together, and I said, wait a minute, Dad, this is my house too. You can't tell me to leave my house. He thought for a minute, and then we both left. Because you see, what my father and I became were best friends.

We could sit on the front porch and talk about anything, and share a life together, because that was the goal. The goal wasn't for my father to grow up and be some angry man mad at me all the time, but to have a son that he would want to spend his time with.

And that's what God wants for us too. He wants a grown-up relationship with you. Jeremiah chapter 29 says this, I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord.

Plans to prosper you and not harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

[53 : 50] Being holy is the goal. In the 14th verse, it says, make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy. Without holiness, no one can see the Lord.

The goal is that we can be with God, live with God, because God loves you. Because God cares so much about you that he won't let you wander off the boundaries.

He won't let you walk into the falls without trying to pull you back. He won't let you destroy your life without making an attempt to help you. Because his goal is that we're going to enter into his goodness on that day.

And sit and be blessed with him for all eternity. The prodigal started to say his little speech, Father, I have sinned before heaven and you. I'm no longer worthy to be called your son.

Make me like one of your servants. He didn't even get it out of his mouth before this happened. His father, seeing him far off, ran to him and said, well, I already said that.

[54 : 52] Go on to the next one. But the father said to his servants, quick, bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandal on his feet. Bring the fatted calf and kill it.

Let's have a feast and celebrate for this son of mine was dead and is alive again. He was lost and is found. So they began to celebrate his return.

We live to the principles of God. We'll have more peace. We'll have more love. We'll have a sense of confidence and hope that will sustain us even in the midst of the brokenness of this world, which we will face.

Even in the midst of suffering and real struggle, we will have a God that will walk through it with us because he loves us so much. God is good. And all the time.

So embrace God and you will embrace goodness. Live in his love. And you won't have to worry about discipline because God will take your life and make something beautiful out of it and give you a life that is really, truly good.

[55 : 56] important. What is ruined? You and what are you doing? Let's do it.

You and what are you doing? I wonder if you're ruined.

His keep But I will get wszystko You and I Welt T I wonder if I'll ever find my way. I wonder if my life could really change at all.

All this earth, could all that is lost ever be found? Could a God have come up from this ground at all?

You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things out of the dust. You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things out of the dust.

[57 : 26] All around, hope is bringing up from this old ground. Out of chaos, life is being found in you.

You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things out of the dust. You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things out of the dust.

You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things, you make beautiful things out of the dust.

You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things out of the dust. You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things out of the dust. You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things, you make beautiful things out of the dust.

You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things out of the dust. You make beautiful things out of the dust. You make beautiful things, you make beautiful, you make beautiful things out of the dust.

[59 : 05] You make beautiful things You make beautiful things out of the dust You make beautiful things You make beautiful things out of us piano plays softly God, I come to you Let my heart be changed with you

Growing from the grace That I found in you Lord, I come to know The weaknesses I see in me We'll be sent away By the power of your love Hold me close And your love so lucky Take me here Draw me to your side And as I wait

I'll rise I'll rise I'll back me And I will storm you Your spirit In for the power of your love Lord, I may our eyes Let me see the face to face The knowledge of your love Has been in me Lord, I may you are mine As your will unfolds in my life You may be every day By the power of your love

Holy Moses Let your love surround me Bring me fear Call me to your side And as I wake Our eyes are blightly legal And I will soar with you Your spirit leads me on By the power of your love Someone once said that when you sing, it's like praying in two ways, once with the words and once with the music.

So today we're going to do something a little different. This song, as we sing it, really feels like our prayer of confession. So we're going to offer this as our prayer of confession this morning.

[63 : 11] Jesus, I could not tell you, the words that you have spoken. Jesus, I could not tell you, the words that you have spoken. Jesus, I could not tell you, the words that you have spoken. Jesus, I could not tell you, the words that you have spoken.

Jesus, I could not tell you, the words that you have spoken.

Jesus, I could not tell you, the words that you have spoken. Jesus, I could not tell you, the words that you have spoken. Jesus, I could not tell you, the words that you have spoken. But the words that you have spoken. Jesus, I could not tell you, the words that you have spoken.

Is to have any picture or is to have any footer for vaccine?

Helen is■■■, uh-huhuh, ah-huhuh. Lord have mercy, praise have mercy.

[64 : 26] Lord have mercy on me. Lord have mercy, praise have mercy.

Lord have mercy on me. I have built an altar where I worship things of man.

I have taken journeys that have drawn me far from you. Now I am returning to your mercies ever flowing.

My mighty precious help me love you again. Amen.

Amen. Lord have mercy, praise have mercy.

[65 : 54] Lord have mercy on me. Lord have mercy, praise have mercy.

Lord have mercy on me. I have longed to know you and all your tender mercies.

I can give a love for forgiveness ever flowing without end. So I bow my hand before you in the goodness of your presence.

Praise forever shining like the beacon in the night.

Lord have mercy on me.

[67 : 29] Lord have mercy on me.

Lord have mercy on me. The prodigal returned to his father. And his father threw his arms around him and said, My son, who is lost, has returned.

In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Glory to God. Amen. Amen. Something beautiful.

Something good. All my confusion. He understood. All I had to offer him was brokenness and strife. But he made something beautiful.

All I had to offer him was brokenness and strife.

[69 : 12] But he made something beautiful of my life.

Amen. Please be seated. You know, God is calling us all back home. Each and every one of us have things in our lives we need to return to God. Brokenness we need to repair with God.

And there's nothing, nothing too far gone that God can't receive you back. So you're welcome at the table today. This is where we receive Christ. This is where we say, I want God to embrace me as a loving father again.

And we put all the brokenness behind us and move forward in the way that God wants us. You're welcome today at the table to be blessed by God. The Lord be with you.

Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

[70 : 18] In the beginning, your spirit moved over the face of the waters. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.

Your spirit came upon prophets and teachers, anointing them to speak your word. And so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn.

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Holy are you and blessed is your son Jesus Christ. At his baptism in the Jordan, your spirit descended upon him.

You declared him your beloved son. With your spirit upon him, he turned away the temptations of sin. Your spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to announce that the time had come when you would save your people.

[71 : 36] He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection, you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the spirit.

When the Lord Jesus ascended, he promised to be with us always, baptizing us with the Holy Spirit and fire. On the night in which he gave himself up for us, Jesus took bread, and he gave thanks to you.

He broke the bread and gave it to his disciples. He said, take and eat. This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

And when the supper was over, he took the cup, gave you thanks and praise, and gave it to his disciples. He said, drink from this, all of you.

This is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new covenant poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sin. Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.

[72 : 57] On the day you raised him from the dead, he was recognized by his disciples in the breaking of the bread. And in the power of your Holy Spirit, your church has continued in the breaking of the bread and the sharing of the cup.

And so in remembrance of these, your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us.

As we proclaim the mystery of faith, Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here.

And on these gifts of bread and wine, make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world, the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood and empowered by the gifts of the Spirit.

By your Spirit, make us one with Christ, one with each other and one in ministry to all the world, showing forth the fruit of the Spirit until Christ comes in final victory.

[74 : 06] And we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your Son, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours. Almighty Father, now and forever.

Amen. Shall we pray together the prayer Jesus taught us? Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Amen. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen. Will those who are serving please come forward. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[75 : 25] Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. The table is set.

God himself invites you home to the celebration feast. Come and join us at the table at the rail for prayers for healing, to light a candle, whoever you are, wherever you've been. God welcomes you home.

Come and join us at the table. We'll see you next time.

[77 : 23] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[79 : 53] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[83 : 11] Thank you.