

March 24, 2019

The Greatest Gift is Love: Love Corrects

Last week we learned the test of loving Jesus is to keep (obey) His commandments. **John 14:15** *"If you love Me, keep My commandments."* Obedience through humility is the manifestation of love. "Keep My commandments" basically means to love God, love one another, and love righteousness. Our greatest blessings come through obedience to His Word.

One of the most difficult aspects of God's love is to receive correction. No body likes to be corrected, or be told what to do. How we receive correction is a direct reflection of our **spiritual maturity**. In Revelation Jesus addressed the church at Laodicea who are known as "The Lukewarm Church" because they were mostly self-sufficient, and did not walk by faith. They became complacent to sin, and stopped maturing in their faith. Jesus warned *"I will vomit you out of My mouth!"* **Rev 3:19** *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.*

Rebuke: to reprimand sharply, to scold someone, to turn back or keep down; "Stop it now!" "Shut up!" given as an authoritative command.

Chasten: to discipline, punish, subdue, humble, restrain, purify, refine. To chasten is more than just correction, it is punitive with a purpose to make holy.

Scourge: to whip, affliction, thorn in one's side. The Apostle Paul had a thorn in his flesh because of pride (**2Cor 12:7**)

Heb 12:5-6 *And you have forgotten the exhortation (stern warning) which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives."*

We must be careful not to *"despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged."* Most often this comes because we blame our own heart issues on someone else and therefore deem the chastening of the Lord as unfair; "I am this way because of them! God, why are you doing this to me?" We are accountable for our own heart so guard it! (**Prov 4:23**).

God will use people to chasten us through His delegated authority, and through relationships and situations.

Heb 12:7-9 *If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? 8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.*

Heb 12:10-11 *For they (our fathers) indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. 11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

Footnotes SFLB: chastening brings us to spiritual maturity. Remember: God doesn't expect us to be perfect, but He gives us the ability to be "perfectly trained" (**Lk 6:40**) so we can be like Jesus filled with peace, not fear, angst and anxiety.

We are chastened because we are in disobedience to the Lord, and sin has set (taken root) in our heart. We could be unaware of this sin, but nonetheless, it is still there affecting our life. At this point, our breakthroughs, victories, healings, and miracles are limited because everything of God flows through our heart, and our heart has been hardened because of sin. God will tell us to deal with issues in our heart. It could be through closing the door to sin, going to the altar for prayer, repenting-forgiving restoring a relationship. It could be with self-discipline i.e. food, caffeine, exercise, prayer time, drugs, TV time, or other issues. We know the voice of the Holy Spirit, and everyday we make choices.

2 Cor 12:9-10 *And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities (sickness), in reproaches (disasters), in needs (lack), in persecutions (people issues), in distresses (emotional), for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong. What does it take to get your attention?*

1 Cor 11:30-32 *For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.* Self-discipline (fruit of the Spirit) or God discipline?

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