

Whom He Loves, He Chastens and Scourges

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If you will this morning, turn with me to our text which is found this morning in Hebrews 12:6.

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

Let us pray.

Dear heavenly Father, how glorious thou art, how faithful thou art. I thank thee, O Lord, that thou hast brought us here to this place, that you have preserved this place in this wicked world. Lord, we ask that you would enable us to come away, that you would fill our hearts with thy love, that as we speak this day of thy love, that you would reveal it and show it and apply it to our souls, that thou wouldst be pleased to reveal what true chastening is, the importance of it, the needfulness of it, what it is and what it is not, that thy people, Lord, may be fed, that thy people may have close communion with thee as thou and only thou can provide and produce. To thee be all glory. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

As I said, our text this morning is Hebrews 12:6, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Last time I was up here, I spoke to you from something Paul said in 2 Corinthians about the love of Christ that constrains, compels, empowers, forces, the child of God away from himself. It's the only way that we have death to self in this life is when we are constrained by the love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Today, I want to look at something, a characteristic of his love that we don't readily talk about much. It's something we fear. It's something we draw back on in our carnal understanding and our carnal nature of it, the way that we view it, and that is the chastening of the Lord, for our text tells us today that the Lord loves all of his people whom he chastens, and that he scourges every son that he receiveth.

Chastening is defined as "to correct by punishment for the purpose of reclaiming an offender; to purify from error." The Bible gives us this picture in refining. The word of

God gives us this understanding and over and over in the Bible when it talks about, when Paul talks about the refining or the removing of the dross, that's what sin is to us.

As we look at this passage this morning in the verses leading up to our text and the verses after our text, you'll see that the sin of unbelief and sin itself can drag the child of God way down in this life, and in being dragged down in this life, it means that as we're drawn back to this world by sin, it causes us, sin does, to embrace the world; to try to walk in the world; to try to understand the world a little bit better. That's in our own understanding. And you see just by that statement, that we have a need to be shown that the world is at enmity with God; that the world is at enmity with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And how the Lord loves us, he shows us this by chastening us and that's why it's good for the child of God, it's needful for the child of God, because without it, we will continue in sin; without it, we will continue in self; without it, we will continue embracing the world and what the world has to offer.

That is why this is such a blessed portion of Scripture to the children of God, and praise be to God that the Holy Spirit wrote this because if this wasn't here, when we are dealt with in what we would deem to be a harsh manner whether the chastisement is an affliction, whether it's affliction of mind, whether it's affliction of the body, whether it's a hardship in life, and as you'll see with the saints of old, many of the chastenings that the Lord brought in their life they loved. Not themselves, it was the chastening God designed for his children but it was brought upon those whom they loved so that the Lord would reveal something to them.

And that's the question. We have so many things in this world and so many people and voices and things that tell us what's good for us, what's bad for us, and when we come to the word of God and we read something like this, "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," as I said, in our carnal understanding of it, we draw back because we don't want to be corrected. We don't want to be punished for sin. We don't want to be purified because we know that process means extreme heat. We know that that process means pain. We know that that process could even mean sorrow. So how do we tell the difference between just hardship that we have in this life because of sin, and the chastening hand of God? And Paul defines that today. He defines that in this passage.

So I'd like to back up and start from the beginning in verse 1. After we come out of that beautiful chapter, and I say chapter even though Paul didn't write in chapters, it was one long letter and you could tell that how 12 starts with, "Wherefore." He's continuing what he was talking about in 11, and we know 11 as being the great chapter of faith; of how the Lord gave faith to these ones and he raised them up and we're told even in 37 they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword, and at the end of that it says they were being destitute, afflicted, tormented. These are all the chastenings of the Lord, but the great overcomer of chastening or the great revealer of really the depth of the love of the Lord in chastening is faith; the faith that the Lord gives us to see that he has dealt this to us for good and out of love.

So when Paul goes through all of these ones who the Lord had chastened and had given great love and faith to, we come to 12 where he says, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of martyrs," it says witnesses, the Greek word is martyrs as he's referring to those that were written in 11. Paul says as we have all of these great examples of how the Lord chastened those whom he loved, how the Lord brought great faith into their life to overcome and to strengthen them in the hour of need, as we have this great cloud of witnesses, "let us lay aside every weight," and that is the question for us today as we sit in this room, what is it that weighs you down?

I'm burdened this morning. What am I burdened of? When I think about really the core of what I'm burdened by, when the Lord removes all of the circumstances and what the trial is and he takes me deeper, what really is it that burdens me? And it's unbelief. It's unbelief that the Lord can't work in a situation to make it better; to make it prosperous; to bring good out of it.

"Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us." We just came out of faith, talking about the great faith that overcomes, well, the antithesis, the opposite of faith is unbelief and unbelief causes the child of God so much pain, so much worry, so much doubt, so much anxiety, so much hardship in this life, and if the Lord doesn't come and chasten us to bring us back to the way, to bring us back to the truth, to bring us back in his life, not our life, if he does not do that out of divine love, we will continue to walk amiss. We will continue to live in sin. We will continue to follow after the world.

"And the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." It's interesting terminology Paul uses in a race, because when we think of a race, we always think of those who run as fast as they can to win the race. I guarantee every race you've ever run in your life and whatever competition you've been in, you've set out to win that race, but this race is different. This race, Paul says we need patience to run. Well, that means we're not running as fast as we can to the finish line. We need patience. We need endurance. We need to be stopped in our tracks. We need to be shown that thou art the man. We need to be shown that this is what we lack. This is what we are without the Lord. This is what we are without being corrected.

Have you ever examined, and you only could do this by the Holy Ghost, have you ever looked at your life, and some of you have lived a lot longer lives than I have, have you ever been brought to examine your life and to look back at dark days in your life where you were walking away from the Lord, when you were walking in your own intellect and your own intelligence and your own hardness of heart, and you were walking that way, could imagine today as you sit in this room what your life would be if the Lord didn't bring you to the end of yourself? If he didn't bring you to see that he was the answer? That he is life? That he is the reason for living? Because all of those things that make life hard for us in this life is because of self. Self-preservation. Self-exultation. "Look at me. Look what I've been through. Look how hard life has been." If the Lord leaves you in that state, you will continue to see nothing but self and why you believe you're worthy to be relieved of what has been brought into your life.

But that's not what divine chastening does. It brings two things that Paul is going to tell us about today. It's going to reveal the Lord's holiness against sin, and it's going to reveal the Lord's righteousness, which means you don't have any. It's the end of our own righteousness. It's the end of it. It's the end of it in Christ and as Paul says, "let us run with patience the race that is set before us," that race is life. It is set before us and all of us in here, every one of us, have a different number of days that make up that life. I can't look at you and tell you how long you're going to live. Nobody can. You can't look at yourself and tell how long you're going to live, but the Lord has that race ordained and every day is ordained and every minute detail of that day is ordained in the Lord for you.

That is the race that is set before you and how does Paul exhort us to run it? As fast as we can? As hard as we can? To do all that we can do? We hear that so much in this life, "Be all you can be. Do all you can do. Grab all you can. Add as much stature as you can to yourself. Make your name in this life because this is all you have. Carpe diem, seize the day." But Paul says something to the children of God, he says, "let us run with patience," which is a fruit of the Spirit. The race that is set for the child of God is a race that is lived after the Spirit; that is run after the Spirit.

"Let us run with patience the race that is set before us." And many of you, I know like me, when I read something like this and I think, "Lord, I must do it with patience? How can I? How can I run with patience?" Well, verse 2 reveals the answer. We're not left to ourselves.

He says, "Looking unto," what? The trial? No. Looking unto the tribulation? No. Looking unto the situation? No. "Looking unto Jesus the author," the beginner where all faith begins, "and finisher of our faith." Life on earth is lived by the faith of the Son of God and the faith of the Son of God is the beginning of life and it's the end of life. That race that he just told us in 1 is a race to be won and raced in Christ's faith. He is the author of it. He is the finisher of it.

That is why it's so needful for us but listen to what this faith reveals to the child of God. Listen to what faith equips us for. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy." There was a great joy set for the Lord Jesus Christ that was set before him and that was the saving of his people from their sins. That was the ascending up to the heavens on the right hand of his Father. That was the joy of saving every one of his people from the drudgery of this life that he went through, because that's what verse 3 is going to tell us this morning. Chastening is not about you and me. Chastening is not about the people of God. It's about him. It's about Christ. There is so much we miss. We're so dogmatically taught in this life whether it be the Reformed faith, whether it be the Presbyterians, whether it be whatever it is, they're very heavy on this point and that point is man-centeredness of faith. Your faith. You do. But we are robbed of the glory that Christ has for his people with Christ being the head of that every time we put our life, our faith, ahead of what's being said here.

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross,," You say, "Wow, it must've been a great joy for the Lord

to lay down his life for his friends." Greater love has no man. That's what we talked about last time, was that love of Christ that constrains us; the love of Christ that's needed for every one of us to defeat the word "I" in our life.

"The joy that was set before him," and because of that joy that sustained him. It's the same joy that will sustain you and I, that same joy which is a fruit of the Spirit again that will sustain you and I to endure the cross. That's what the Lord told us, wasn't it? "Take up your cross daily and follow me." We don't look at that portion of Scripture and jump up and down and say, "Lord, give me that cross every day! I can't wait to bear this cross for you!" That's not the joy, the giddiness, that the world looks at in religion and says, "Oh, it's such an easy life. It's easy-believism. This is how I live for the Lord." No. Christ's life. Look at the Lord Jesus Christ and that's what Paul wants us to do in this hour and as we examine here in our text today, how does the Lord love us? What did he go through to love us and chasten us?

"Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame," of being set there in front of all of those people and they mocked him, and they derided him, and they said, "If you be the Son of God, come down from there!" And they mocked him over and over again and they spit on him and they laughed and they wagged their fingers at him as he hung there on the cross.

He "endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." That is where we see him triumphant over the chastening hand of his Father. You and I must and will, by the Holy Spirit, see that because I know my Scriptures here tell me that we will be chastened, and if we are chastened, we must understand what that is and how the Lord Jesus Christ was chastened first. He without sin, but was made sin. And later when we get to the end of this passage, that we might be partakers of his holiness, I hope you understand that holiness that he reveals in the child of God is the hatred for sin and how that sin put Christ on the cross; how he was made sin. We are chastised for our sins and rightfully so, but he was chastened for our sins.

"And is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." It is finished what he has been through for his children so that, yes, he can succour us; yes, he can bring us through this chastisement which, by the way, our text tells us is out of his great love for us, his love for our soul that is so polluted in this life.

Then Paul tells us in verse 3, "For consider him." Don't consider yourself. Don't consider how hard the chastisement is. That's not what chastening is about. It's considering him. He just talked about it a little bit when he said he endured the cross, despising the shame. He says, "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself." They denied the deity of Christ. They mocked him over and over again. The religious world said, "You are not the Christ. You are not the Messiah."

"For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." And that's very important because that's why the Holy Spirit led Paul into this conversation about chastening is because we do become

complacent; because we do become, I don't know if I want to call it hardened, but we get inundated with life and every day we just keep living the same life the same way over and over. I don't know about you, but when the Lord does chasten me, it does stop me in my tracks. Many times, I don't get sick a lot, but when the Lord brings a sickness in my life, it's usually pretty bad. It knocks me down for quite a few days and when that happens, the Lord is faithful to reveal why it's important to be knocked down that way. What is it that I'm so carried off with every day that I lose sight of the Lord and his goodness every day?

We'll get there. We'll get there about these two things that are revealed in chastening, but now we're getting the groundwork laid for us why it's so important and think about this, Paul writing to the Jews at this date and he says to them, after considering all of those that came before them, he said, "You have not resisted unto blood like those ones we just talked about, those that were martyred, those that gave up their life." Now, you've resisted against Satan, you've resisted against the world. You and I, the same way. We've resisted against sin as best as we can, but we have not resisted unto blood, and because you and I have not resisted unto blood, where that has been brought into our life, we become complacent. We become easily carried away with this life. That's why the chastening is needed. That's why it's so needful, to wean us from this life, this earth that is not our place or residence. Our place of residence is hid with Christ in the heavens. Our eternal rest is in Christ in the heavens. It's not here on this earth. And if we didn't have the chastening hand of the Lord, if we didn't have that love of the Lord to correct us because of sin, we would go on embracing this world, loving this world, needing this world over and over again.

"And ye have forgotten," verse 5, "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." Paul quotes Solomon in Proverbs 3:11 where Solomon wrote, "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction." We are exhorted and encouraged not to despise the chastening of the Lord because it's needed for our soul. I can't tell you that. There might be some in this room that say, "I don't need to be chastened. I live a holy life. I live a good life. I commune with Christ every day. I don't need to be shown that I'm a sinner." And there are millions of people like that in this world today, meeting right now at this hour, being told that very same thing. A prosperity religion where there is no hardness in it for the child of God. There is no way of the cross, even though Christ said there was a way of the cross; even though Christ said, "Take up your cross and follow me." No. No. No. No. If you just give this, if you just live this way, if you do your duty, if you obey Christ, if you earn your way, the Lord will treat you the right way.

And if that's true, you and I are in trouble because we don't live that way, because these enemies that the world and self and sin and the devil are so powerful that they overcome our minds and our hearts, and we must be refined and we must be washed and renewed in the righteousness of Christ by the Holy Spirit revealing to us what Christ has done. Consider him. I pray at this hour, we consider him not ourselves. We consider him. Consider him who went through this. Consider how he went through all of this to show

us the way of the cross in him and not to despise when the Lord brings it into our life because it is needful.

We have forgotten that exhortation though. Just as this century, Jews forgot it, we certainly forget it today and the only way we remember is when the Lord reveals to us the goodness of him to bring a trial to us; to bring the afflictions that he delivers us out of all of them. That's what the psalmist said. Many are the afflictions of the righteous. The righteous are the righteous in Christ but the Lord delivers them out of them all.

And I would never want you to leave a message like this not with the faithfulness of Christ at the forefront of your mind, and to walk out of here fearing what that chastening will be. It's not about fear, it's about Christ and how he loves whom he chastens, and the reason he needs and he does that is to reveal himself in us in the dire need of the hour to have the Lord reveal himself in us.

And there are degrees of chastening. That's what he just told them. "You've not resisted unto blood." That was a degree of chastening for that age. You and I, it hasn't been to the degree of chastening for this age but there have been hard things in life. As I mentioned some of them, the afflictions are very hard. The losing of loved ones is very hard. And what do those events and what do those providences that the Lord brings in your life, what does it reveal to you? What does it yield to you? The hardness of God? How he's unapproachable? Or the goodness of the Lord? Because that's when we come to our text.

Paul has brought us all the way through the argument now and he says, "For whom the Lord loveth he chaseneth." Whom the Lord loveth he chaseneth, he corrects, "and scourgeth," that means whips, "every son," every son, "whom he receiveth." And every child of God will have their different degrees of chastisement based on how the Lord has designed that chastening for their own soul and to grow them in the grace and knowledge of him. Knowledge of what? Life? "Oh, life was hard when I did this. I got sick. I shouldn't do that anymore. I won't get sick next time." That's the world's logic. Why did the Lord bring sickness into your life? What is the purpose of the Lord bringing these trials?

Paul said it like this in 1 Corinthians 11:32, "But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord." When we are judged, and you might not like that. You might be sitting there today saying, "Oh, the people of God aren't judged. The people of God are not judged." Really? Well, the Bible says they are. We are judged. We are judged of our sins and why is that so important? Because it's the chastening, well, let's finish this verse.

"But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." That's what the end of chastening is, to show us the wickedness of the world; to show us the condemnation and the just condemnation of the world. It's just reward for being at enmity with our Lord; to being at enmity and saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us."

So why is it so important for us? Why is it needful for you and I that we not be condemned with the world? That's the goodness of the Lord. That's the depth of his love that we will not be condemned with the world. "There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus who walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh." Walking after the flesh is where condemnation is, and rightfully so because it's at enmity with God.

The psalmist in 118:18 said, "The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death." Now think about that a minute. The chastening of the psalmist was not unto death. The chastening of Moses was not unto death. The chastening of David was not unto death. The chastening of Paul was not unto death. There are in the sovereignty of the Lord, the chastenings in this life are to lead us to Christ.

I thought about that yesterday as I was sitting in my backyard again. I like to sit out there sometimes. I get too cold in the house so I go out and I sit in the sun and as I'm sitting there, I'm looking at how barren everything looks because the freeze that had killed everything including my grass in the backyard. I started thinking about death, not in a morbid way, just about death, and I thought about what a great privilege and what a great blessing it is not to die. Everything around you dies. The pets we love, they die. The plants we have, they die. The people we love, they die. But for the children of God, they fall asleep in the arms of Christ.

The chastening that the Lord does for the children of God is to conform them to the image of the Son, and I'm not here to tell you whether the chastening the Lord brings is unto death or not unto death to you, but what I say in the Scriptures this morning is the chastening of the Lord is out of love. And when I think of how he has defeated death, and how he has done that, that's what, we're considering him. We're considering him this morning, Paul said. Consider him who endured the cross and endured death so that he could defeat death for his people.

That sting of death is removed. The sting is the fear of death and that's removed by Christ when he reveals to us the need, and that's what chastening does. If you notice in your life the chastening hand of the Lord when he brings you especially in afflictions, it brings that mind to consider death. But the Lord doesn't leave us in the fear of death, he reveals to us how he has conquered death.

That's what love does. That's what the chastening out of love does, it reveals to the child of God that he is victorious and that the way that the Lord went is the way that we are brought through, out of love to be conformed to his image, to be readied for the life to come where there is no death, there is no pain, and there's not even a need for faith anymore. There is not a need for hope. There is a great need for love and there is a fountain of love that's never taken away so that the children of God will always love him and worship him and not tire in doing so, and not pain in doing so. The chastenings that are here are necessary for this life, to make this life not so palatable to us, not so glorious to us, not someplace we want to spend eternity in, but to be readied to spend eternity with our Lord.

In Job it's written in Job 5:17, "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty." Happy is the man? That's the joy that was set before. Consider him. Consider the joy that the Lord had in going through what he went through for his people, and that same joy is the joy that he gives us to go through the chastening to look to what eternal life is in Christ. To look past this earth and look past the chastening and the affliction and the hardship.

John said something very interesting in 1 John 4:17. He said, "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment." Hm, how could that be? How could love be made perfect that we could have boldness in the day of judgment? We just heard Paul tell us that the Lord judges us when he chastens us, therefore we're not condemned with the world. How can we have boldness in the day that we're judged? Well, it's by love.

Then that verse ends this way, "because as he is, so are we in this world." That verse says so much to me because it says what he went through, I'll go through. Those temptations he had with the devil, I'll have them of the devil. Those chastenings he went through because of my sin, I'm going to have those because of my sin. The hardship, the ridicule, being laughed at by this world. Yes. And why is this? Because as he is, so are we in this world. There won't be a different walk. The sheep will walk in the path of the Shepherd. They will not walk in the path of the hireling. They will walk by the power of the Shepherd, in the path of the Shepherd.

How often are we chastened? I can't answer that for you. I can't answer how many times if you've ever been chastened or felt the chastening hand of the Lord. Asaph in Psalm 73:14 said, "For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning." I don't know what it would feel like to feel the chastening hand of the Lord every morning. I don't. That gets back to our passage and why Paul said it's so needful to be chastened because we don't realize what we're up against every day. We don't strive against sin. We don't. That's why the Lord, it's needful for him to intervene, and how loving he is to do so.

"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." As we go on, "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" We have this union that the Lord tells us about that if you're chastened, you're a son of God. It's a mark. It's something that as you experience the chastening, it's an assurance that you're a child of God. But we still haven't had for us defined what to look for to know what chastening is and not just the hardness of life, because we all go through the hardness of life and it yields bitterness in us and we get bitter at life sometimes. That's not chastening. It's not, at least, what chastening reveals. It might be during chastening, yes.

"But if ye be without chastisement," verse 8, "whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." If we are not chastened, if the Holy Spirit is pleased to examine our lives today and we can't find any time that we were chastened of the Lord, I say worry. Be very afraid. I say that more for the older ones in the room than I do the

younger ones. Be very afraid because we are told here that whom the Lord loves he chastens, and how needful it is, and if we are without chastisement, we are not the sons of God.

Paul said in Romans 8:9, he said, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Why would I bring that verse out? Because it's the Spirit of Christ that reveals to us the chastening of the Lord. It's the Spirit of Christ in us, the hope of glory in us, the seed of Christ in us, that reveals the goodness of chastening, the needfulness of chastening. None of us are screaming out every day, "O Lord, chasten me! Chasten me!" But we need that chastening. We are the ones that would hide under the rock and say, "Lord, I don't want to get sick. I don't want to do these things. I've resisted against other things but, Lord, this chastening thing is very hard for me." You don't have to worry about that. His chastening is in his divine plan for your life, all according to the measure of grace that he gives his children, every measure different.

"Furthermore," we're told in verse 9, "we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence." Isn't that true? Children, when you were raised, adults, when you were raised by your parents, don't you remember being corrected by your dad? Don't you remember how much reverence you gave your dad when he corrected you? Don't you remember how much you did not rebel against him because of that correction? Maybe you did in your mind.

"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?" Shall we live in that knowledge or is there a better knowledge in Christ? In the grace and knowledge of the Lord, does he teach us that chastening is needful? That chastening is because of the love of Christ?

"For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure," because they saw that it was right; they saw that it was good. This is talking about your earthly fathers. They saw that it was right to chasten you and correct you. They did not want you going down this path so they corrected you this way, "but he for our profit," for the soul to profit. All a physical father can do is correct the child and hope that they don't do it again in the physicality of it, but they can't touch the soul. That's what divine chastening does. He does it for our profit, the profit of the soul, "that we might be partakers of his holiness." And now in these last two verses, that's what starts to come into the forefront. How do we define chastening? What does it reveal to the child of God? Is it just leave a bitter taste in our mouth? Do we walk away from it after, you know, we have that saying in life, hindsight is 20/20. It's true. It's true in the spiritual realm too. We don't see the goodness of the Lord in the chastening but what does it yield when it's over? What does it reveal to us as we go on? I've had people tell me that chastening isn't because of sin. It is because of sin. We're told that all throughout the word of God. If we didn't sin, we wouldn't need chastening. If we didn't follow after the world, we wouldn't need chastening. That's all sin. Unbelief is sin.

"That we might be partakers of his holiness." That's why Peter could write in 1 Peter 1:16, "Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." How are we holy? We're holy in Christ. We're made partakers of that holiness because of his chastening. And what is holiness? It's the absence of sin and it's also the hatred of sin. It's seeing sin for the sinfulness that it is and hating it, but we will not be brought to hate it without the chastening love of the Lord to do so. I've had those come up to me, I've said it to myself, I've prayed it to the Lord, "Lord, I want to hate sin more than I do." Well, there's a way that the Lord uses to make you hate sin and it's the chastening hand of the Lord and it's very much needed.

"That we might be partakers of his holiness." Not our own, again, because we don't have any. And if that's not clear enough, 11 finishes it for us this morning. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous." It never seems to be joyous. Present, notice that. No chastening for the present, while you are enduring it, it does not seem to be joyous. While you're going through it, it is hard. Our minds run, "O, the Lord doesn't love me. The Lord is doing this destroy me." All those friends came to Job and said that to him and we think of that and we say, "Oh, that's true." The world tells us that too. "You must sin worse than anybody else because this is happening to you." We'll say that to ourselves too. Always. "Oh, the Lord hasn't delivered me from this, I must be this horrible sinner." That is true but it's out of love. It's because he loves us and that's what Paul said. It doesn't seem that way, it seems very grievous while you're going through it.

"Nevertheless," even though that is the case, even though that is the truth, "afterward." When the Lord brings you through the chastening, what is his purpose in it? Is his purpose for you to say, "Oh, I'm glad that's over," and return right back to the mire? Go right back to the same sin? Sadly we do it. That's why we're chastened more and more. We're not chastened just once.

"Nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness." That's what it brings forth. The righteousness of Christ. It shows you how righteous Christ was to chasten you that way. How loving he was to chasten you that way. How holy God is and how it's needful to be chastened and how sin must be punished. And he brings you to the Lamb to show you how it was punished ultimately in him, and how he stood in your place as a propitiation, absorbed the wrath of his Father for you. And that is the love of the Lord to do so, to reveal salvation in his righteousness and in his holiness, and that's the needfulness so that we as we walk in this life and we become so hardened in this life and we become so set in this life and we become so enamored with this life, the Lord says, "You have need of this correction to reveal to you the love that I have for you and your soul, and to reveal to you the righteousness of me and the holiness of me."

And as I said to you at the beginning of this sermon, how easy it is in this life for religious man to say, "This is what I need to do to make sure I'm not chastened anymore." That's what a lot of religion teaches us today, "Do this. If you just stay on the path." Well, you're not going to stay on the path. The Bible tells us we're not going to stay on the path. David was chastened because he numbered the people and a lot of people died because of that. David was chastened because he sinned with Bathsheba and his son died because of

that. Moses was chastened that he was not allowed to go into the Promised Land because of unbelief. Paul was chastened with this thorn in his flesh that came up over and over and over again. Even though he besought the Lord perfectly, it was not removed.

So we have it. The chastening hand of the Lord that's necessary and needful because he loves us just as he's loved every saint that we read about in Hebrews 11, every saint that we have read throughout all of the word of God, because as our text tells us this morning, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and he scourges every son whom he receiveth." You might not like that and I'm going to tell you, I'll be honest with you, I don't like it either. My flesh doesn't like it at all, in fact, I want to go and hide under a rock out there somewhere, but my soul when the Lord reveals the depth of how bad sin is and the curse that's upon sin and the penalty of sin is death, how needful it is to be shown the goodness of the Lord and the righteousness of the Lord and the holiness of the Lord in the love that he has for us to chasten us so that, yes, we're not condemned with the world.

May the Lord reveal to us in this hour and as we walk from this place, the depth of his love that constrains us, the depth of his love that chastens us to conform us, as Romans 8 tells us, to the image of his Son. And I hope you see that this morning, how he is the firstfruits of chastisement and as he walked, as he is, so are we in this world by his faithfulness to do so. To him be all glory.

Dear heavenly Father, may you add thy power and clarity and, Lord, love thy people now. Love us close to thy side and come with power to reveal the great need to be shown your salvation and the evilness and wickedness of sin for, Lord, only you can do that. To the praise and glory of thee and in Jesus' name I pray. Amen.