

## Discipline

### Scripture Reading — Proverbs 3:1-12

*The LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in. Proverbs 3:12 —*

If you're an athlete, you need a coach to discipline you. You might rather avoid hard workouts, but a coach pushes you to the limit and drives you to excel--"No pain, no gain."

If you're a child, you need parents to discipline you. If no one makes you do your homework or punishes you for breaking rules, you will not develop into a responsible person. The firm discipline of loving parents can bring out the best in you.

If you are a child of God, you need the Lord's discipline. You may prefer all happy times, but sometimes God uses disappointment and suffering to cultivate character (Romans 5:3-4). God disciplines you because he cares. Your Father in heaven does not want to raise a spoiled brat; he wants you to grow to maturity.

"Endure hardship as discipline ... God disciplines us for our good, 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 ..." (Hebrews 12:7, 10-11).

Discipline is painful. You don't have to pretend to enjoy it. But you can still thank God for what he is teaching you, and you can look forward to the end result. Your Father is working to give you not just better self-esteem but a better self. He is shaping you to be like Jesus.

### Prayer

*Father, thank you for Jesus, who "learned obedience from what he suffered." Teach me that same obedience, and make me more and more like Jesus. In his name, Amen.*

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