



# RIVERS OF LIVING WATER

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## GOD DISCIPLINES THOSE HE LOVES

Last week we asked the question, Is God angry with me? And what was the reply? God is angry at the wicked and angry at sin. Sin must be punished. But if we have been born again we are not the wicked. What are we? We are the righteousness of God in Christ. We are new creations. So God is not angry with us. And Jesus paid the full punishment for all of our sins. So God no longer needs to punish us. We need not fear his punishment. Instead we can enjoy his love. One of the ways he shows us his love is by disciplining us. This shows us that we are his children and that he wants the best for us.

However we still feel at times like God is punishing us, especially when we have done something wrong. Or we punish ourselves when we have done something wrong. When we feel that way we need to remind ourselves that Jesus paid all of our punishment. And we also need to understand more fully the difference between Punishment and Discipline. God will not punish his children. But he will discipline them.

Last week we began to talk about the difference between punishment and discipline. Today we are going to look at this some more. Let's pray. God, thank you that you are no longer angry with us. Jesus took all of our punishment. Thank you that you love us as your precious children and so you do discipline us. Help us to understand more of your love and especially to understand your discipline. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Let's make a chart of some of the main differences between punishment and discipline.

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Punishment</b>	<b>Discipline</b>
<i>Designed for</i>	Unbelievers/ the Wicked	Believers/ God's children
<i>Source</i>	Justice and Anger	Love
<i>Purpose</i>	Vengeance/ Just Retribution	Correction
<i>Relational Result</i>	Separation	Closer Fellowship
<i>Personal Result</i>	Fear of further punishment	A right lifestyle; a deeper appreciation of God's love; confidence
<i>Associated Feelings</i>	Pain, Guilt, Blame, Shame and Fear	A little pain, but afterwards peace, joy, comfort, wisdom

Now let's look at each of these differences. This will help us understand God's love for us and why he disciplines us.

## Designed For

God's anger, and God's punishment, are directed towards the wicked, in other words those who do not accept God. The unbelieving. All have sinned. Jesus paid the punishment for all and satisfied God's righteous anger by dying on the cross. But for those who refuse to put their trust in Jesus, the punishment remains.

God's discipline is directed towards those who have been born again. They have put their trust in Jesus and therefore trust that he has paid their punishment. Now they are God's children and he disciplines them because he loves them.

True discipline does not lead to separation. It leads to closer fellowship.

## Source

The source of Punishment is justice and anger. *God is a just judge, and God is angry with the wicked every day.* (Psalm 7:11 NKJV) We see repeatedly throughout the Bible that God is angry at sin and he has to punish it. *And the LORD'S anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation, that had done evil in the sight of the LORD, was consumed.* (Numbers 32:13 KJV) Israel had sinned greatly, so the Lord became angry and punished them by making them wander in the wilderness for forty years until all the ones who had sinned greatly were dead.

The source of Discipline is Love. *For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.* (Hebrews 12:6 KJV) *He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly.* (Proverbs 13:24 NKJV) God disciplines those he loves, just like a father who loves his child will discipline him in an appropriate manner. Punishment can be meted out in anger, but true discipline is not based in anger, it is based in love. In the Psalms David asks God not to punish him in anger. *O LORD, rebuke me not in Your wrath, And chasten me not in Your burning anger.* (Psalm 38:1 NASB).

## Purpose

The purpose of Punishment is vengeance and retribution. Punishment is not designed to change or help a person. It is simply designed to make someone pay for something they have done wrong.

*In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.* (Jude 7 NIV) The Greek word used here for "punishment" (ekdikēsis) means "that which proceeds out of justice". God's punishment and vengeance are not motivated by a sense of personal injury or purely out of a sense of anger. It is true that God feels anger, but he doesn't punish just because he is angry. He is angry because of sin, and he judges sin to be evil and therefore punishes it.

Discipline is entirely different. It involves inflicting a little pain on the person who has done wrong, but it has the purpose of helping us change, for our own good. Its purpose is not vengeance. Its purpose is correction of the error for the good of the person who made the error. *Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness.* (Hebrews 12:10 NIV)

## Relational result

Both discipline and punishment have an effect on our relationship with God and with others. The relational result of Punishment is Separation. A perfect example is the eternal punishment that will be suffered by everyone who rejects Jesus Christ. *And in his justice he will punish those who persecute you. <sup>7</sup>And God will provide rest for you who are being persecuted and also for us when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven. He will come with his mighty angels, <sup>8</sup>in flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who don't know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus. <sup>9</sup>They will be punished with everlasting destruction, forever separated from the Lord and from his glorious power* (2 Thessalonians 1:6-9 NLT) All those who refuse to obey the gospel of Jesus will be punished with everlasting destruction, forever separated from the Lord. That is what hell is all about- a place totally separated from God and his love. The result of punishment is separation.

True discipline, however, does not lead to separation. It leads to closer fellowship. We can see this in Hebrews: *And 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:*<sup>6</sup> *For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.* (Hebrews 12:5-6 KJV) God's word says here that he disciplines us because he has accepted us as sons. So God's discipline in our lives speaks of his acceptance of us, not his rejection of us.

I clearly remember when one of my sons was very little, one night he and I had a confrontation. He wanted to do something and it was not in his best interests to do it. He must have been less than one year old. I wanted to train him for his own benefit. And every time I told him no and stopped him doing the thing, he screamed and fussed and cried. So each time I gave him a little pop on the leg with a wooden spoon. This went on for about an hour. I must have popped him at least 30 times. Before you panic, please understand these pops were light and just enough to let him know my disapproval of his actions. Finally, he capitulated. And then he reached out his arms and he gave me the biggest and longest hug he had ever given me. That day his affection towards me reached a new level. Why? Because true discipline, done in love, leads to closer fellowship. God's discipline does not mean he is rejecting you. It means he accepts you and loves you.

### *Personal Result*

*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. (1 John 4:18 NASB)* Fear involves punishment. In other words, if we believe God is going to punish us, we will experience fear. I know a man who as a child was beaten regularly by his mother. She would constantly punish him, by hitting and beating him. Many times she would use a leather dog leash. Many times she would beat him even when he had done nothing wrong. If his mother began to be angry, he would tremble with fear about what she may do to him to punish him in her anger. Years later, when he had become a man and got married, he was talking with his wife in the kitchen of their house. They had been married for only a week. They were deeply in love. He said something to his wife and she moved her arm suddenly. He immediately shrank back and lifted his hand to defend his face. She asked him why he had lifted his hand to defend himself. He said, "Because I thought you were going to hit me." She was amazed and said, "I would never dream of hitting you. I love you." He realized that he had become so used as a child to punishment, that even now he still had some fear of punishment in his heart. Over time he learnt that she loves him and her love will not permit her to harm him. Fear runs deep. But perfect love casts out fear- it casts out the fear of punishment.

Discipline does not involve that kind of fear. God disciplines us because he loves us. So we have nothing to fear. In fact, the Bible tells us that God is love, and that his perfect love casts out all our fear. *We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. (1 John 4:16 NASB)* We know that God loves us. So now we need to believe and trust that he loves us even while he is disciplining us. In this way our fear is driven out. Punishment just leads to fear of more punishment. Discipline leads us to understand God's love for us more. Discipline leads us to know how to live. Discipline reminds us that we are God's children and so it enables us to hold our head up high and live with confidence in the world.

### *Associated Feelings*

Punishment obviously involves pain and suffering. The feelings we have when we fear punishment are feelings of guilt, of blame, and of shame. When Adam and Eve sinned for the first time in the Garden of Eden, what did they do? They hid. They felt shame. They expected punishment. *And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.<sup>9</sup> And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?<sup>10</sup> And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. (Genesis 3:8-10 KJV)* If you feel you have done something wrong you may feel that you need to stay away from God. But he loves you and he wants you to come to him, not stay away from him. He will not punish you. He may discipline you, but he will not punish you.

Discipline also involves some pain. But it is pain with a purpose. We may feel some sorrow and guilt if we have done wrong. And it is good that we feel guilt when we have done wrong, if we understand that God will discipline us in love and will not punish us. *For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death. (2 Corinthians 7:10 NASB)* *Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. (Hebrews 12:11 KJV)* If we have done wrong we will feel sorrow. That is good. Then God will discipline us. That is also good. And afterwards, the discipline of God produces peace and righteousness in our daily lives. It is actually comforting to know that God will discipline us. *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. (Psalm 23:4 KJV)* Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. God's rod of discipline is comforting. It means that he is with us, watching over us as our loving Father, helping us to make the right choices and so to enjoy his peace in our lives. It teaches us wisdom.

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It can be difficult to change the way we think, to trust and believe the love God has for us. Especially if in the past we have believed that God is angry with us and wants to punish us. But the truth is that God wants us to know his love more, and so it is important that we receive and believe what his word says about his love for us.

Brothers and sisters, we need not fear punishment. Jesus paid all of our punishment. Let's be encouraged this morning that God is our father and will lovingly discipline us when we need to be disciplined. He will train us to live our lives the way he designed us to live them. That is his responsibility, as our father. Our job is to relax and enjoy him.

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**WE ARE HERE TO SERVE. IF WE CAN  
ASSIST YOU IN ANY WAY IN YOUR  
WALK WITH THE LORD, WE WOULD  
LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

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IF ANYONE IS THIRSTY LET HIM COME TO ME AND  
DRINK  
JESUS CHRIST- JOHN 7:37

## WHAT WE BELIEVE

We at **Ministerio La Fuente** believe in Jesus, the Son of God— His virgin birth - His sinless life – His death and resurrection.

We believe He sent His Holy Spirit to convict, comfort and empower every believer to live a life wholly for God.

We believe in God's Word, the Bible, infallible and eternal.

We believe Jesus is Lord of all and is coming back for all those who love Him.

Also, we believe that the life Christians lead should demonstrate the Lordship of Christ and the Love of God.