

Daily Devotional, November 3, 2021 Discipline is Never Easy

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. 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. Hebrews 12:7-11 (NIV)

I remember as a child wanting broccoli, which I despised, to taste like chocolate, or corn or potatoes if it had to be a vegetable. My mom insisted that we eat all of our vegetables. “They’re good for you!”, she’d say. Something good for me should be pleasant tasting, not something that tasted like grass!

Today, I want running to be as delightful as eating a tub of buttered popcorn in a movie theater. (Remember that?) Something that is healthy for my heart should be enjoyable, something I can’t wait to do, not something I try to punish myself with. It’s funny, when I was a kid I loved to run. I wonder what happened?

I would like refusing seconds to be as simple as falling asleep after a filling Thanksgiving dinner. Something so wise should be oh so easy.

Some days, I would like to recline my driver’s seat, inform my car of my destination, and have it safely steer me to that place while I take a nice snooze.

Yet none of these situations are based in reality. There’s an old saying, “Tough times don’t last, but tough people do,” My mom used to also say, “If it tasted good, it *wouldn’t* be good for you,” whenever she gave us that nasty tasting cough syrup. My high school football coach used to also say, “You’re gonna’ do those laps until Jesus returns!” (This of course, was at a Lutheran high school.)

Life is not always easy. It brings us hard times: losing someone we love, going through job loss, having a tree come down on our house, or going without power for several days or more. During these hard times, we need to look closely at where our true hope lies and discover once again that we need to return to the Lord who may discipline us, but it is because God loves us, has redeemed us, has gifted us, and has called us to follow Him.

Sometimes being “grounded” by God helps us to become grounded *in* God! We must be ‘ground’ into His image.

Prayer: Father, forgive me when I try to avoid your discipline. Work in my life to help me become open to the depth and correction of your love so I can discover and share in your holiness. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.