

# 7 Levels of God's Disciplinary Love

“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth”. (Heb.12:6)

One becomes a child of God through faith in the Son of God. Then the Lord begins a work to conform His sons to the likeness of His Son – Jesus the Lord. Sometimes He will use discipline to help us reach that goal. Parents also discipline children they love. Following are 7 aspects of God's discipline revealed in His Holy Scriptures.

## 1. **Punitive** (1Cor. 5, 2Cor. 2:6 / 11:29-32) (*“this punishment, which was inflicted of many”*)

Parents will punish their child when they see a serious wrong being done. They don't want the child ever to repeat the wrong again for its good and the welfare of any siblings learning. The Corinthian church was to excommunicate a “brother” living in sexual immorality from its fellowship and social eating time to shame him into true repentance - and so others would fear and not do the same thing, 1Cor. 5. This is called “*punishment*”, 2Cor. 2:6. Also the Lord Himself carried out punitive discipline on believers not taking the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner, as some were sick or even fell asleep (died), 1Cor. 11:28-32.

## 2. **Corrective** (Jonah 1, 3:1-3) (*“Scripture...profitable for correction”*)

Parents might also discipline their children not so much as a punishment but so they will correct a poor decision, like taking away dessert until they eat their nutritious food. The Lord Himself caused Jonah to be in a storm and then be swallowed up by a great fish until he changed his mind and corrected his path to preach where God had told him to go.

## 3. **Instructive (educative)** (Heb. 5:8 / Psa. 105:16-22) (*“profitable ... for instruction”*)

Parents might allow their child to experience “negative things” to train them to be disciplined and skilled workers for the future. They might eventually have them do their own laundry and make their beds, etc. so they will know how when no longer at home. The Lord Jesus Himself learned obedience by the things that He suffered. He, by feeling suffering as a man, was then perfected to be a great High Priest for us humans. Then there is Joseph who was rejected by his shepherd brothers, sold as a slave, served in a chief political household, falsely accused, unjustly shackled in prison - and then ruler of all Egypt under Pharaoh. His past testings educated him to relate to all as “*lord of all Egypt*”. (See Judg. 2:22 / 2Chron. 12:8).

## 4. **Preventive** (2Cor. 12: 7-10) (*“lest I should be exalted above measure”*)

Parents will deny their child something it might want so the child is prevented from harm. If a 6 year old asks for the keys to the car, it is denied him for it would bring much harm by driving it. Paul the apostle who received great revelations from the Lord was denied his request that a bodily problem be removed that humiliated and hurt him. This was to prevent him from being exalted in pride so he would stay useful to the Lord. He discovered that in his weakness he was empowered with the Lord's strength. He saw that God's grace was enough to get through. And so physical denials and lows led him to spiritual heights.

5. **Productive** (Gal. 1:12, 16-19) (*“he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit”*)

Parents might take things away from children so they can focus on something more positive. They might not permit an outing with all the friends so children can accomplish their studies. As a gardener prunes back a tree so the energy will find the right area to produce more fruit so the Lord does this with us at times. After Paul was converted he did not enter into ‘full time’ ministry and apostleship immediately but found himself somewhat isolated in Arabia for years. It seems there he had many revelations of truth to help write the NT.

6. **Informative** (Gen. 22:12 / 2Chron. 32:31) (*“to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart”*)

Parents may test their child in a hardship to gain information where he is at mentally or physically. A father might ask a young son to carry over a pail of bricks just to see how he does and where his strength is so he can be used for greater things. God does this too. With Abraham, He tested him concerning the sacrificial offering of his only son of promise. As Abraham stretched forth the knife, he was stopped, and the Lord said; *“now I know that thou fearest God”*. The Lord knew by experience the reality of Abraham’s faith – and was pleased. Also with King Hezekiah the Lord extended his life 15 years to *“know all that was in his heart”*. Hezekiah used those extra years for pride but then humbled himself.

7. **Recollective (experiential)** (Deut. 8 / Heb. 10:32)

*“tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience hope:”*  
*“But call to remembrance the former days...ye endured a great fight of afflictions”*

Parents might train their children with much hard work to earn and save money so that they will have those lessons of experience burned into their memory for a future time of larger stakes. It is said that England’s Queen Victoria gave each one of her children a job at their Osborne estate in the mid 1800’s. Each prince or princess had a tool with his or her initial written on it and worked under the supervision of a foreman. They received the same wages as the other servants. They did jobs like cutting lawns, cultivating gardens and sweeping the driveway. The girls were required to prepare a dish for the table everyday.

The Lord did such with Israel. He humbled them for 40 years in the wilderness where they were shut up to Him for survival so they would not forget Him nor that His Word was their source of life. For if they got into the promised land where they would prosper and forget the Lord, it would be disastrous for them. So He gave them tough experiences so they would not forget. Also in the NT the Hebrew Christians were told to call to remembrance the former days of affliction so they would be now encouraged in waiting patiently for Christ’s coming.

\* So we see that not all discipline is for a wrong done. We must be careful in judging, and take heart that God loves us. While no chastening is joyful for the present: *“afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby”*, Heb. 12:11. If we are not sensitive to the Lord’s dealings we might get bitter rather than helped. The same sun that melts the wax can also harden the clay. It depends on the material.

*That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: (1Peter 1.7)*