

# **The Blessing of God's Discipline ?!**

Hebrews 12: 3-13

# Joy in our suffering – possible?

- Many believers struggle with questions of God's goodness, faithfulness, and love when facing problems and painful experiences

# What is this “joy”?

- not from outward circumstances
- inner attitude
- no matter what happens, Jesus Christ is with me
- He will never abandon me
- never stop loving me
- never go back on His promises
- He’s always in control of everything that’s happening
- His plans and purposes for me are being accomplished

# How sin affects us

- Death is the penalty for all sin (Rom. 6: 23)
- Through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, God offers us freedom from the condemnation sin brings (1 Pt. 2: 24)
- For those who look to Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins, “there is therefore now no condemnation” (Rom. 8: 1)

# What does God do with our sin ?

- He throws it behind his back (Isaiah 38: 17)
- Treads it underfoot and drowns it in the sea (Micah 7: 19)
- Blots it out (Isaiah 43: 25)
- Forgets it, removes it, covers it, takes it away, cancels it (Col. 2: 14), washes it
- Forgives it (1 John 1: 9)
- God can do and will do all of that because of one thing he did in the past ...
- He laid all our sin on Jesus His beloved Son

# What happens when a forgiven believer sins?

- legal standing before God not affected
- still forgiven because Christ's death paid for all of our sins
- “Christ died for our sins” (1 Cor. 15: 3) – without any distinction among past, present, and future sins
- “We are God’s children now” even in our sin (1 John 3: 2)
- While sin does not affect our status or standing with God, it does affect our fellowship with God

# Sin affects our ...

- **fellowship with God** for God is grieved by our sin
- Often results in God's discipline in our lives since “the Lord disciplines those He loves” (Heb. 12: 6)
  
- **relationships with others**
- Sinful words or actions can result in a broken relationship

# What to do when we sin?

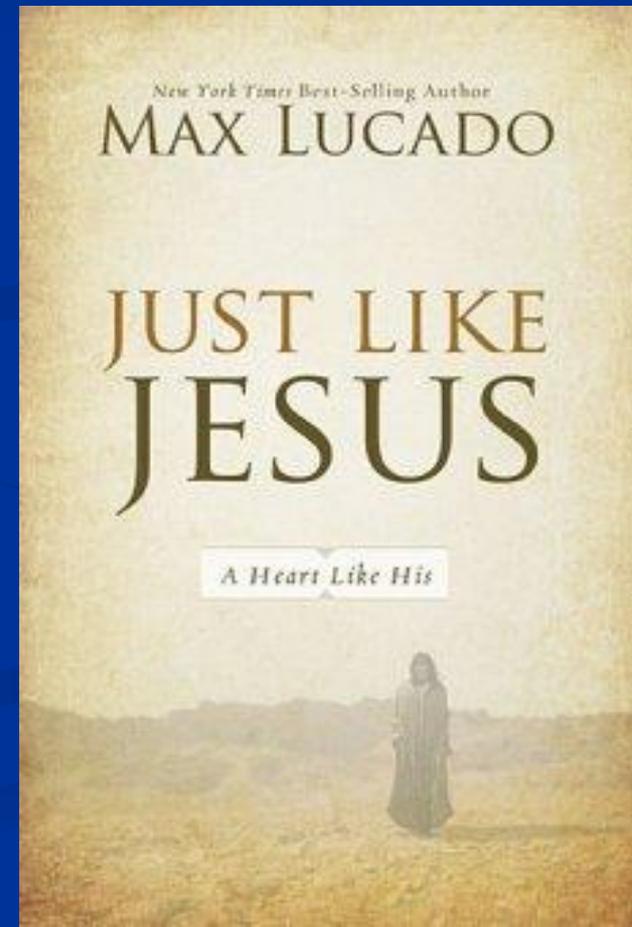
- Honestly and quickly “confess” sin(s) to God
- When we do that, God is “faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1: 9)
- Should not participate in a long-term pattern of greater and greater disobedience to God’s moral law
- because “no one born of God makes a practice of sinning” (1 John 3:9)
- Continuing sinful pattern in one’s life could mean that this person never really was a Christian

# A question to consider ...

- “20 years of experience, or 1 year of experience repeated 20 times?”
- Is this situation possible in our journey as a follower of Jesus Christ ?

# One more quote ...

“God loves you just the way you are, but he refuses to leave you there. He wants you to be just like Jesus.”



# Anyone tackled the homework?

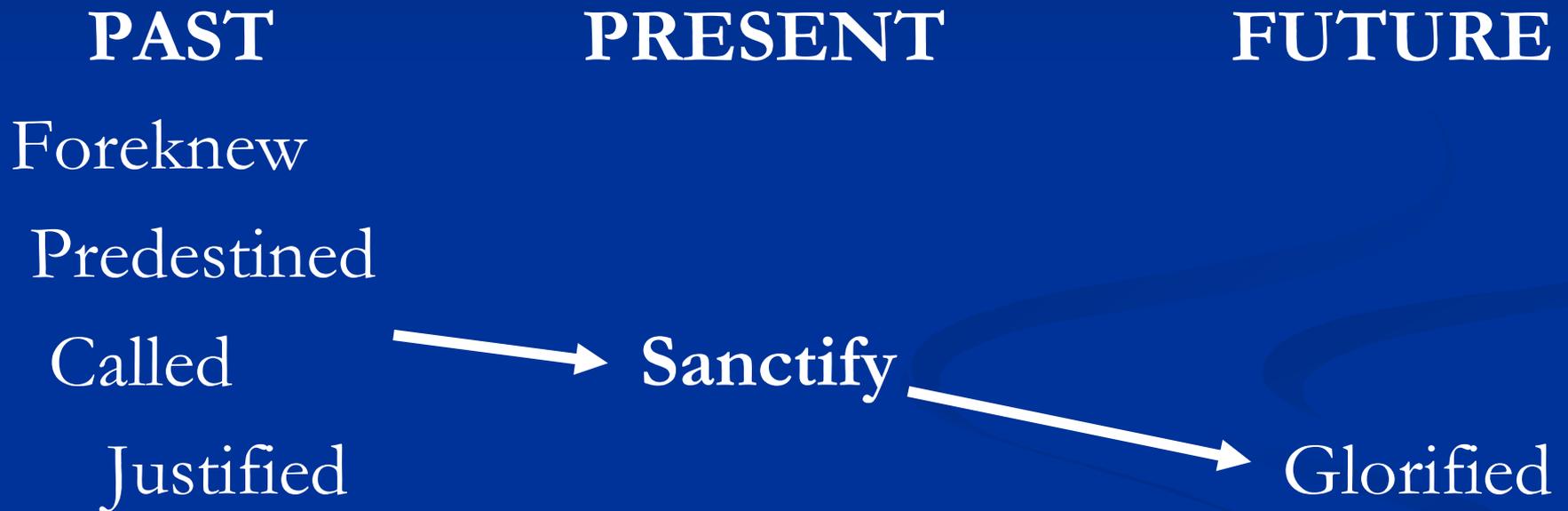
- What is the “good” that God promised in Romans 8: 28? Read verses 28-30; pay special attention to verse 29.

28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. 29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

■ What is the “good” that God promised in Romans 8: 28?

28 And we know that in all things God works for the **good** of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. 29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be **conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

# What is the “good” that God promised in Romans 8: 28-30?



“conforming us to the image of His Son”

# That is the “good” that God promised His children in Romans 8: 28

Foreknew

Predestined

Called

Justified



Sanctify



Glorified

“conforming us to the image of His Son”

# The Blessing of God's Discipline ?!



# The book of Hebrews

- “The book of Hebrews is a very mature and sober book when it comes to the pain and stress of Christian living and the endurance that it takes to run the race and fight the fight and finish well. It’s not a book that people gravitate toward — unless they have suffered and struggle for some explanation of how that relates to God. In other words, the more easy and pain-free your life has been, the less you will cherish the kind of spirituality taught in this book. And the more you have suffered, the more you will cling to the precious teachings of this book — *if* you are willing to believe them.”  
– Pastor John Piper

# Approach to today's passage

- Take note of their suffering in chapter 12
- What kind and where are they coming from?
- Do their suffering have a purpose? If so, what is it?

# Take note of their suffering

- Consider [Jesus] who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. (verse 3)
- In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. (v. 4)
- No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. (v. 11)

## “Source” of their suffering?

Think of all the hostility [Jesus] endured from sinful people; then you won't become weary and give up. After all, you have not yet given your lives in your struggle against sin. (vv. 3-4; NLT)

- hostility from “sinful people”
- persecution, short of martyrdom

# Who is in charge of what's happening?

5 And have you forgotten the encouraging words

God spoke to you as his children? He said,

“My child, don't make light of the Lord's discipline,  
and don't give up when he corrects you.

6 For the Lord disciplines those he loves,

and he punishes each one he accepts as his child.”

7 As you endure this divine discipline, remember that

God is treating you as his own children. Who ever  
heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father?

(vv. 5-7; NLT)

# What this Scriptural passage shows us

- God - surgeon planning our surgery, not ER physician stitching our cuts
- God - sovereign over the hostility of our enemies, the dangers of our circumstances, the health of our bodies
- God designed all that happen to us ultimately as a loving father's discipline
- DISCIPLINE: *paideai* = to train a child (*pai*)
- discipline = to train, teach, correct, ...

# Designed in love

- “For the Lord disciplines those he loves” (v. 6a)
- “As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children” (v. 7a)

# Designed for our good

- “But God’s discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness.” (v. 10)
- “No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it’s painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.” (v. 11)

# How can we know when God is disciplining us?

- Even though Jesus was God's Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered. 9 In this way, God qualified him as a perfect High Priest, and he became the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey him. (Heb. 5: 8-9; NLT)
- God designed suffering in the life of Jesus to bring him to the fullest expression of obedience
- “We ... forget that God's hand of discipline may be on us not simply to spank us because we have been bad, but to stretch us and broaden us in what we are doing well.” – Pastor John Piper

# God is always disciplining us in love ...

- sometimes through suffering and pain
- sometimes through His kindness
- Don't you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this mean nothing to you? Can't you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin? (Rom. 2: 4; NLT)

# Many have difficulty feeling loved by God

- due to our imperfect parents, especially fathers
- Fathers may say hurtful things and lose control of temper
- God never loses control like our earthly fathers
- His discipline always comes with loving application of His wisdom & grace to our situation
- For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God's discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness. (Heb. 12: 10)

# In summary ...

- God never enjoys seeing anyone suffer; He suffers with us

Discipline

Chastise

Chasten  $\neq$  Reject

Scourge

Punish

# In summary ...

- God never enjoys seeing anyone suffer; He suffers with us

Discipline

Chastise

Chasten = LOVE

Scourge

Punish

# Have I sinned ?

- “How do I know if I’m being disciplined by God?”
- “How do I know if I’ve sinned?”
- “Read your Bible carefully!”
- “Don’t base your conclusion about whether you have done something wrong on how God is treating you, because that is going to be very confusing. Sometimes he treats you way better than you deserve, and sometimes he spans you in order to bring it to your attention — but you can’t tell which it is. And so you need to decide, “Am I sinning?” by looking at the word of God and discerning what your behavior was like.”

– John Piper

# Concluding Question

- Since we respected our earthly fathers who disciplined us, shouldn't we submit even more to the discipline of the Father of our spirits, and live forever? (v. 9; NLT)



## 2 aspects of the Christian Life

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11: 28-30)

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.  
(Philippians 4: 7-8)

## 2 aspects of the Christian Life

“Work hard to enter the narrow door to God’s Kingdom, for many will try to enter but will fail.” (Luke 13: 24; NLT)

I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified. (1 Cor. 9: 27; NLT)

Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him. (Philippians 2: 13-14; NLT)

# Resting & working hard - inter-connected

- Goal of struggling is to rest in the promises of God and not in the promises of sin
- all the working hard/striving is done in a spirit of “restfulness” knowing that Christ has already won the victory of us, and is working in us to bring us to glory