

# The chastening of the Son

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## Introduction

- As we considered last week, Christ was chastened by the Father in the third wounding event of His offering when He was beaten with rods for our peace. Isa 53:5. It was the Father's initiative to chasten Christ for our sakes, even though He was chastened with 'the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men.' 2Sa 7:14. Christ embraced the *measured* chastening of the Father and, in so doing, learned the obedience of our sonship. Heb 5:8-9.
- Christ also endured the *unmeasured* beating and punishment that was motivated by the wrath of men, and given to Him under the direction of the high priest and Jewish leaders. Christ endured that abuse and reproach, described by the prophet Jeremiah as 'the chastisement of a cruel one', through the resurrection life that was multiplied through the shedding of His blood. Jer 30:14. This was an aspect of 'our death' that He died by the grace of God. Heb 2:9. By *exanastasis*, Christ's mortal body was sustained through that abuse so that not a bone of His body was broken. Joh 19:37.

## Embracing the Father's chastening

- The sufferings we experience throughout our life are an indication of the righteous judgement of God upon the whole world because of sin. 2Th 1:5. There is no inherent blessing in the suffering itself. However, as we *embrace* our participation in Christ's offering, the sufferings we experience are *commuted* to chastening for our benefit.
- Through our participation in the fellowship of chastening and training, which is the practical expression of Christ's third wound, we mature as genuine sons of God. This is what it means to become a *partaker* of the Father's chastening. Heb 12:8. The chastening of the Father is for our maturity as sons of God and for the removal of foolishness associated with our immaturity.
- An illumination of the love of the Father is required in order for us to embrace His chastening. 1Jn 3:1. This is not a cognitive exercise whereby we determine that His discipline must be 'beneficial' for us. Rather, by the motivation of His love, we worship the Father in a trusting embrace. Although painful for a season, the chastening of the Father brings forth the fruit of the knowledge of our sonship and the fruit of peace. Heb 12:11. It was for this reason that the apostle Paul wrote, 'And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart'. Gal 6:9.
- As we embrace the *measured* chastening of the Father toward us, we are aligned to the sanctification of our name and to our works as sons of God, in Christ. Furthermore, the resurrection life of Christ enables us to endure the *unmeasured* punishment and abuse inflicted upon us by 'the hands of men'. This kind of suffering is persecution, which brings forth an eternal reward. Mat 5:11-12. No matter what manner of abuse we have suffered, or will suffer, in our lives, it is the Father's initiative to heal our wounds and to make us whole. Jer 30:17. Job 5:17-18.

## The different aspects of chastening

- The Scriptures teach us the different aspects of chastening and rebuke which we are to receive from the Lord. The chastening of the Father teaches us *sonship*. The chastening of the Son teaches us *discipleship*. Also, the chastening of the Holy Spirit teaches us to *walk according to the Spirit*. As we embrace the chastening of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we are delivered from condemnation, which is God's judgement that has already been passed upon the whole world. Joh 12:31.

## The chastening of the Son

- Christ rebukes and chastens us as our High Priest, who is also the immortal Head of His church. Col 1:18. The seven letters written to the seven lampstand churches are an expression of the rebuke and chastisement of the Son, as He ministered and spoke among them as their great High Priest. In His letter addressed to the presbytery in Laodicea, Christ was actually speaking to all seven lampstand churches. He said, 'As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent ... he who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' Rev 3:19, 22. Christ is speaking to us, also, in this same way - addressing our 'lack', while also admonishing us concerning the pathway of obedience and overcoming that He has pioneered for us. It is incumbent upon us to quickly heed and repent when the Son speaks to us in this manner.
- Although it may be initially confronting when the Son chastens us, as we receive His rebuke and meet Him personally, we are illuminated by His immeasurable love toward us. Eph 3:18-19. The love of Christ compels us to embrace His chastening and the fellowship of offering that He reveals. 2Co 5:14. We embrace the chastening of the Son through godly mourning and repentance. 2Co 7:11. As we read in the book of Psalms, 'Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. *Kiss the Son*, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.' Psa 2:11-12. These verses exhort us to honour and worship the Son by embracing Him when He chastens us.
- Through the rebuke that comes by His word, the Son confronts our disobedience, and endeavours to provoke in us a zeal for repentance. Rev 3:19. In response to His discipline, we confess, by faith, that He is our 'Lord and Teacher'. Joh 13:13. Submission to His *lordship* is demonstrated through our *obedience* to repent, when we are chastened by Him. Submission to Him as our *Teacher* is demonstrated as we *learn* from Him concerning the work of our priesthood. Through His instruction, we are enabled to join the fellowship of His obedience, as He offered Himself for our sake. We are then able to offer ourselves in the service of priesthood to care for others.

## Christ addresses our fallen humanity

- As Christ speaks to us in love, we come to realise that He is 'walking among us' in judgement. 1Pe 4:17. Rev 1:13. The first phase of His judgement is not an expression of vengeance or wrath upon us. Rather, Christ speaks to us truthfully and in simplicity - exposing what is of the truth and what is of a lie. 1Jn 2:8. The Scriptures explain that 'all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light'. Eph 5:13.
- When Christ comes among us in this way, He calls us by name - addressing us in our humanity and exposing the darkness of our ignorance, sin and disobedience. If we refuse to turn in repentance when we are judged by the Lord, we remain in darkness, enslaved to the lusts and projections that belong to our fallen humanity. If we continue in this state, which is our natural condition, then we are unable to come to

the knowledge of the truth. Joh 1:5. It is the blindness of this condition that causes us to become offended at Christ's chastening upon us and to regard His correction as being 'too harsh'.

- The word of Christ's rebuke and chastening is full of grace and truth. Why is this? His word is an expression of His judgement and is, therefore, full of *truth*. Also, His word gives to us the *grace* to mourn and to repent. This is described in Scripture as 'a spirit of grace and supplication'. Zec 12:10. Through His rebuke, this grace is being poured out as a blessing upon us. And, through this grace capacity, we are able to mourn with godly sorrow and to repent of our sin. 2Co 7:10.
- Through His rebuke and chastening, Christ identifies our deeds that are not consistent with the culture of how Yahweh lives. Yahweh lives by offering – each Person of the Godhead lays down His life in offering to reveal the Other. Any other culture, or way of living, is an offence to the Lord. For this reason, Jesus expresses His personal displeasure at our deeds, which are in opposition to the culture of offering. Rev 2:15. When the nature of our deeds has been exposed by the word of Christ's rebuke, we are then able to repent of our deeds and to be established in the culture of offering.

### The word of Christ's rebuke

- The word of Christ's rebuke *firstly* exposes our sense of personal rejection and failure which stems from our *own righteousness*. In demonstrating this principle, we recall the rich young ruler's response to Christ's rebuke. Jesus addressed him in love and exposed the false riches of his self-righteousness. 'Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me".' Mar 10:21. The rich young ruler became despondent when Christ explained to him that his lifelong pursuit of self-righteousness had yielded no eternal reward.
- *Secondly*, the word of Christ's rebuke exposes our *ignorance* by illuminating our loyalty to a false doctrine. As individuals within a Christian community, we have actively chosen to adhere to various beliefs and practices that we have inherited from our religious history; yet, these practices have their origins in variant doctrines which are not consistent with the teaching of the New Testament writers. Christ rebukes and chastens us, even in our ignorance, because we willingly chose these beliefs and practices, believing they would provide us with some kind of spiritual benefit. Jesus highlighted our accountability for our ignorance in the parable of the stewards who were put over the household. Those who 'did not watch', *in their ignorance*, were still chastened with a few stripes. Luk 12:48.
- The *third* aspect exposed by Christ's rebuke is our *failure to take heed* to His word. We recall that Peter, on two occasions during the night of Christ's offering, did not believe what Christ was saying to him regarding the inadequacy of his self-motivated zeal. However, under pressure, Peter was not able to sustain his own zeal and determination to suffer alongside Christ as His disciple. It was during the second and third wounds of Christ's offering that Peter remembered the words of Christ. Luk 22:61. He then understood, at a personal level, his failure to accept and take heed to what Christ had said to him. At this point, Peter found grace to mourn and to repent.

## His word as a rod

- As Christ was beaten with rods in the court of Caiaphas, His ministry as our great Shepherd was being revealed by the Father. The Father's word is the instrument of Christ's shepherding ministry. Christ uses this instrument in three distinct ways – as a *rod*, as a *staff* and as a *goad*. These three dimensions of the word of the Father are ministered to us by Christ, and are then applied to our hearts by the Holy Spirit. In this regard, King David testified, 'Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.' Psa 23:4. Also, Solomon described the word of the great Shepherd, spoken by His messengers, as a goad. Ecc 12:11.
- Specifically, the *rod* of correction in Christ's right hand is applied to our lives as the word of His chastening and rebuke. The rod represents His *authority* to shepherd, or tend, the church. Christ testified that He received this authority as a gift from the Father. Joh 5:27. Rev 2:27. Christ has now committed this aspect of His work to those to whom He has given ascension gift grace. After He ascended to the right hand of the Father, following His resurrection, Christ gave specific gifts of grace – that is, the capacity to be an apostle, a prophet, an evangelist or a pastor-teacher – to certain men, and appointed them to a specific work within the presbytery of a lampstand church. Those with ascension gift grace are called 'overseers'. Their work is to minister the word of Christ's exhortation and rebuke to the presbytery and to the church. Thus, it is through the ministry of those with ascension gift grace that we receive the chastening word of the Son.
- As the presbytery heeds the word of Christ's rebuke, spoken to them by those with ascension gift grace, they are enabled to mourn with godly sorrow and to turn in repentance from their disobedience and ignorance. As they are obedient to repent of their former conduct, when chastened by the Lord, they obtain from Christ the capacity to shepherd the church as a presbytery of elders and deacons. 1Pe 5:2. This capacity is demonstrated as they call every believer to embrace the chastening of the Son through godly mourning and repentance.

## A focus toward our time of prayer and fasting

- The Lord spoke through the prophet Joel, calling the whole nation of Judah to repentance, saying, 'Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping and with mourning.' Joe 2:12. The prophet explained that the chastening of the Lord was an expression of His lovingkindness towards them. He wrote, 'So rend your heart, and not your garments; return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and He relents from doing harm.' Joe 2:13. Judah had just suffered a terrible agricultural loss through a plague of locusts. Joe 1:4. Importantly, they needed to embrace the Lord's chastening and learn from His instruction in that season of suffering. Joe 1:4. Joel explained that the purpose of their fasting and repentance was to entreat the Lord for the blessing of the meal offering and drink offering to be restored to the house of the Lord. Joe 2:14.
- In our current season of suffering, we are turning to the Lord with fasting, weeping and mourning in order to embrace His chastening upon us. As we repent and learn from Him, we are entreating Christ for the blessing of our participation in the meal offering and the drink offering. We are to become the unleavened bread and the drink offering to one another, as we commune together in an *agape* meal, or love feast. The apostle Paul explained that our participation in this way is the fellowship of the body of Christ. 1Co 10:16. We are learning, through Christ's chastening upon us, to offer ourselves to nourish and support one another, every time we celebrate an *agape* meal.