

Treasuring His Word...

From the Pastor's Heart:

“My son, do not reject the discipline of the LORD, or loathe His reproof, for whom the LORD loves He reproves, even as a father, the son in whom he delights” (Proverbs 3:11-12).

When a person gets saved, there is an incredible burden lifted by the power of Christ, a wonderful filling of peace in the presence of the Holy Spirit, and a new devotion to a life that's pleasing to the Heavenly Father. But what happens when a Christian sins?

Jesus begins a rescue operation! It starts with a word of **spiritual discipline** from the Heavenly Father. In a sense, we stop making progress on the path in our walk with God, while He administers discipline. He is a faithful Parent. You don't lose your salvation when you sin, but God will do whatever it takes to correct us. Sometimes our Father only needs to look at us, call our name, or say, “Hey!” But then, if we do not respond immediately to His redirection, we'll begin to experience **spiritual depression**, a loss of peace, peace of mind and heart. There is a progression of the intensity in the pressure of God's discipline in His desire to get our attention. There may be a change in our circumstances, an unexpected expense, or some interruption in our plans, but the Lord will use something to help us realize there is discord in our relationship with Him. That loss of joy should cause us to turn immediately back to Him. Is that where you are today?

We have great joy when we get saved! We are filled with the presence of Christ and experience freedom from sin's reign in our heart. But sin steals our joy, for we know God becomes heart-broken, and if we do not respond when we recognize this, it gets worse! For in no time, we'll experience **spiritual derailment**, for our fellowship with God is broken, for God does not tolerate sin. It is no longer like we're with God, yet feeling the tension of discord (“spiritual depression”), but the entire direction of our life becomes derailed to another path! When we begin living a life of rebellion, the spiritual depression becomes horrible loneliness as our path has diverted (“derailment”) from our Shepherd's. And we begin trying to fill the void that God's presence was filling, with various lusts of the flesh (worldly pleasures, excursions, ungodly relationships, alcohol, drugs, food, the stimuli of different types of media and entertainment, etc.). Is that where you are today? Where does all this lead? If we do not repent and turn back to God, we'll experience **spiritual disaster**! Adam and Eve had the best, richest, stress-free life known to man, along with a walk with God every day. And they lost it, because of sin and disobedience. They were thrown out of the Garden of Eden.

What about children of God? Remember, we don't lose our salvation, but we may lose our marriage, our family, our job, friends, money, or health. If this describes where you are right now, believe it or not, God is still more than capable of delivering you! And He is still full of mercy and grace to offer you that deliverance! But you must repent and turn back to Him! When you do, you'll find **spiritual deliverance**. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1

John 1:9). You may ask, “How can Jesus help me, considering how far I have gone away from Him?” Notice what the Bible tells us: “My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world” (1 John 2:1-2).

In Jesus, we have an “Advocate” (one called along-side of us to help us), who when He died for us, paid our sin-debt completely (“propitiation”). And “you” are included in that offering. Has the Lord been trying to get your attention? Turn back to Him today! You’ll be glad you did!