

Discipline - Personal Life, Questions and Answers

by Hoseah Wu

The sermon emphasizes the importance of discipline in Christian life, including obedience, submission, and sacrificial love, as essential for growth and maturity in Christ.

Duration: 59:18

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 14:15-21, Hebrews 8:10, Hebrews 13:7, Hebrews 13:9, Hebrews 13:17-18

Topics: "Discipline"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of ministers who preach the Word of God and encourages the listeners to imitate their faith. He highlights the need for discipline in studying the Bible and suggests reading through whole books for a better understanding. The speaker also urges the audience to engage in evangelism and visiting those in prison as acts of self-discipline for the sake of the gospel. Additionally, he addresses the issue of contentment and warns against the love of money in an affluent society. The sermon concludes with a reminder to obey and support leaders, acknowledging that they may be criticized but encouraging diligence in serving the Lord and His people.

Transcript

Bow our heads and look to the Lord together. Our Father, we do thank you for this opportunity we can be here this afternoon. Lord, we again confess that we are small people, and you are such a great God.

We just pray that you'll come through this afternoon, instead of our smallness, instead of our limitation. So we look to you to be our help, to be our strength, to be our wisdom, and to be our expression. Lord, we just commit this time to you, that you're present with us in a mighty way.

We look to you, Lord, to be our help. We give thanks. In the name of the Lord Jesus, Amen.

Yesterday, oh, there's some coming. Is this good enough, Michael? Yesterday afternoon, we defined discipline as to instruct, to correct, to train, to improve, and to mold, to strengthen, and to perfect characters. And there are two aspects of discipline we touched yesterday afternoon.

One is to be instructed, we need an instructor. To be trained, we need a trainer. And our teacher, our instructor, our trainer is the Holy Spirit.

And the instruction is our transformation and confirmation to the Lord Jesus. And after instruction, we'll be evaluated. So after instruction, there'll be evaluation, and so that we will be exposed, whether we have learned any lesson from the Holy Spirit or not.

And so that's the correction that we'll have to follow. And also, affirmation or approval. Sometimes the Holy Spirit, in His gentle way, does give us the inward joy of knowing that we have learned something from Him.

There's an inward goodness we experience from time to time. That we fail to respond to learn, there's an inward uneasiness which we all feel. And so throughout our Christian walk, we'll be instructed continuously and our lives before the Lord will be evaluated continuously.

We also mentioned that the purpose of discipline is so that we'll be able to fit it together into a corporate expression, a testimony of the Lord Jesus to express His love on this earth in fullness. And second is that we'll be a prepared people for the life to come as His sons or as the wife of the Lamb. To be joined to the head, to be joined to our King, to assist Him in the administration of His kingly affairs in the ages to come.

So we are called with a vocation. And because we have that vocation, tremendous vocation, high-calling vocation, therefore training in discipline is vital. Because God's standard is absolute.

If there's any adjustment or changes, we have to be on our part. Therefore that will require discipline under the Holy Spirit. Now we mentioned three areas of how we are being disciplined.

One is obedience in faith, submission in hope and sacrifice in love. Now yesterday we touched about this matter of obedience in faith. And I'll just touch a little bit this afternoon.

True obedience does not ask for reasons. True obedience does not ask for evidences. But God says we obey.

And it's after we obey in faith, obey, then sometime He will explain the reason why He wants us to obey. Like in the case of Abraham. Now for our human beings, it's very difficult for us to obey without asking for reasons.

We want to know why do I have to obey. You know, on a natural level, when you ask a kid to do certain things, you say, now why, Ma, why? Teacher in school asks student to do certain things, now why do I have to do this? Why, why, why? But in a spiritual discipline, if we acknowledge He is our Lord and He is our King, He alone possess the wisdom. He knows what He's doing.

If we have our absolute faith in Him, then all reasons disappear. And that's how a writer. And that is a lesson we have to learn for the rest of our life.

Never question His wisdom. We should always question our obedience, but never question God's wisdom when He demands something of our lives. Now in this matter of submission in Hebrews 12, we touched upon yesterday afternoon.

It tells us the discipline is but a short time. But the outcome of the discipline is eternal. So that we'll become sharers of His holiness.

It's for our good. Not just for our good, but for God's glory. Therefore, we have to submit.

Because the sonship is something for the future to be unveiled. So therefore, discipline is but a short time. So therefore, we have to learn to submit to the discipline of the Lord.

Now in Hebrews, it's not to despise or not to think lightly of it. We heard this morning, Brother Johannes, how often we overlook or we underestimate the gift of God that He has given to us. We shared yesterday that this obedient life is not in ourselves.

This obedient life comes when the Lord Jesus comes in and takes up His residence in us. It's only through His life we are able to obey. It is only through His life we are able to submit.

It's only through His life we are able to endure and to hope for the certain outcome of the future. So as long as we're willing to submit, sonship is not an expectation. But sonship is a certainty.

Because sonship is what God is after. Now this afternoon, we'll continue a little bit on this matter of sacrifice in love. And if you want to, we can turn to Hebrews 13, the last chapter of the book of Hebrews.

Now this love is not human love. Because human love is selfish love. Only God's love is sacrificial love.

Expects no return. Just gifts and gifts and gifts. So humanly speaking, it is impossible for us to express that kind of love, that quality of love.

Only the Holy Spirit in us can impart that kind of love. So let's review a few things we touched upon yesterday afternoon. Verse 1 of Hebrews 13.

Let love of the brethren continue. We shared yesterday, to begin this love, it's quite easy. We can all love another for a short while.

For a few days. Maybe for a few weeks. But for a few months, for a few years, we find it impossible.

Not just with brothers and sisters in the Lord. Even your immediate family. Your own in-laws.

Your own brothers and their family. You invite them to come to visit you for a few days. You have a wonderful time.

You already enjoy each other. But you linger on for a couple of weeks. They begin to strain.

You wish that you didn't extend your invitation. Because it became heavier and heavier. It's almost to the point of unbearable.

Now brothers and sisters, that is human love. But God's love endures and endures and endures to the end. Until we are completely formed.

Until Christ is formed in us. Therefore, pause a travail for you. Until Christ is fully formed in you.

So love is a travailing love. A suffering love. A sacrificial love.

Now verse 2, it says, Do not neglect to show hostility to strangers. And for this, some have entertained injuries without knowing it. Now first, we have to love those who are in a van.

We learn to love them in a van. Then we are able to love those who are out of the van. If we cannot love those who are in a van, it will be impossible for us to love those who are out of the van.

So therefore, the house of God is a wonderful place for us to learn to love. It's not a place where we know how to love. But it's a place where we learn to love.

And I think the problem today in Dini Fellows is that we think in a church we can love. And then we discover I cannot love. And we cannot love each other.

And therefore we get so discouraged. But church fellowship is a place where we learn to love each other. Not where we know how to love each other, but where we learn to love each other.

And that will require humility. Because we have to confess we have no love. If there's any love we can have one for another, it must be of the Lord.

It's superhuman. Verse 3, we touch upon, Remember the prisoners as though imprisoned with them. And those who are ill-treated, since you yourself also are in the body.

That's extending out the more family, your friends, strangers, and now those who are in prison. And brothers and sisters, thank the Lord. From time to time we do experience that brothers and sisters that we know of do have such a love for those who are confined behind you.

Many of you remember an old saint that we love so much, now he's with the Lord, called Ernest Tate. The Lord began to use this brother by allowing him to go to prison and visit. And he was very faithful in visiting those who are confined in prison.

And because his faithful ministry, many came to know the Lord. And maybe that's one of the areas of the church we have neglected, to minister to those who are within the jail. And that will take some sacrificial love.

Because to be in that kind of environment is not easy. I remember when I was in school, I visited a jail once. It is a scary place.

You go in there, you thought your life is being threatened. It's not of the love of the Lord. No one would do that kind of work.

So brothers and sisters, that will take some self discipline. To encourage yourself for the Lord's sake, for the Gospel's sake, and to visit those who are in prison. Now let's get down to something more personal.

Verse 5. Verse 5. Let your character be free from love of money. Being content with what you have. For he himself has said, I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you.

And I think we can all apply this verse personally. Especially in this affluent society we live in. Everybody is out to get something and more, more.

We seem to have that mentality, if I don't get more this year than last year, then something's wrong with me. But the writer of the Hebrew says, free from love of money. That doesn't mean you should not have money, but it's love for it.

But once you have love for it, instead of you using the money, the money possesses you. And that will take some discipline to be set free from the domination of money. And of course the next thing is that, being content with what you have.

I think that's the key to the whole thing. It's because we're not contented, therefore we aren't there to grasp. And the contentment we can be certain, because the law assures us, he said, I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you.

Now, do we believe God's word to be true or not? I think that is the whole thing. If God says he will not forsake us, and he will care for us, he will not forsake us. And I think we can be content with what we have.

Now, this verse will require some real self-discipline. Because out there is full of materialistic temptation. I remember a brother, Dana, in Singapore, he told us an incident.

A Indian brother came to visit this country, and one of the brothers, I suppose, in Long Island, took him to a shopping mall. He said, now I'll drop you off here, and you go and look at all those beautiful shops, and look at the things on display, and then within half an hour or so, I'll come by and pick you up. So this brother dropped off.

So within half an hour or so, he came back and picked this brother up. He said, now what do you think of it? What is your impression? He said, I discover there are so many things here that I don't need. Brothers and sisters, we should cultivate that kind of attitude.

There are so many things around us. According to the strictest speaking, we don't need all those things. Because our satisfaction, our joy is not in those things, but the Lord himself.

Now I always convicted myself when I travel. If I travel by myself, I don't mind. If I travel with somebody, sometimes I feel the grand easy.

I remember I went to Sao Paulo with Brother Kong. I mentioned his name. We went down together for a week.

And he carried a very small suitcase. But I carried a suitcase twice the size of his. And when I came back, I was really convicted.

Do I need all those things? And I discovered when I was in Sao Paulo, I only used half of the clothing I bought. I really didn't need all those things. And I think that's one thing we have to learn as God's people, to live a simple life, just simply trusting, relying on the Lord.

If we are in the family of the Lord, visiting them, if we need an extra sweater or something, I'm sure we can humbly ask them just for a sweater to be used temporarily. I don't think they mind. That will humble us to ask.

But also give our host an opportunity to serve us in the Lord. That would be something to serve. So to receive takes humility.

I mean to give takes humility, but to receive also takes grace. So we need to cultivate, not just the grace to give, but also learn the grace to receive. And that will take some self-discipline.

Well, let's move to verse 7. Verse 7. Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you, and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith. Now I was meditating this chapter, I found that verse extremely interesting. Two words stood out, considering and imitate.

Now, Hebrews 12, we know we have this great cloud of witnesses. They are the historical figures of faith, recorded in the scripture. But I believe verse 7 is not those who are historical, but those who are with us.

Remember those who, they are leading you, they are guiding you in the things of the Lord, who spoke to you the word of God. And we admire those people, calling them sisters. I'm sure you do, as I do.

We admire them. We admire the servants of the Lord. And we consider them.

Oh, how the Lord uses them. The revelation they have received from the Lord. How are they able to convey the word of God to us? They have received revelation, and they share what they received of the Lord with us.

And how we consider, how we admire them. But the next word says, imitate their faith. Now, I think you'd find it quite impossible.

We will admire their gifts, as they stood up in the platform and shared their beautiful words, but their lifestyle, life of faith, we dare not to touch that. You think of some of the spiritual great men that we read in biography. What they have gone through in this life.

We admire them, but do we dare to imitate their life? Or imitate their faith? We think their lifestyle, their lifestyle is just for them. It's not for us. But brothers and sisters, for those who will follow the law, there's no other choice.

The way of the cross is the only way. So the right to challenge, don't just consider, admire them, think about them, but consider, imitate their footsteps. And Paul said, you are the imitator to me, as I imitate Christ.

Paul did not ask us to imitate him. He said, you imitate me because I'm imitating Christ. So what you see in me is not Paul.

What you see in me is Christ. And brothers and sisters, thank God today, we have many good examples of the Lord's servants, of those who love the Lord, and they are always there challenging us. Are we willing to follow their ways? The way they love the Lord, the way they serve the Lord, the way they live a life of the Lord.

And brothers and sisters, it's worth us not just to consider, but sometimes to imitate their faith. That takes some discipline. Verse 9, I think verse 9 and verse 7 somehow they are connected.

Do not be carried away by varied and strange teaching, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by fools, through which those who will thus argue will not benefit. Not to be carried away by varied and strange teaching. I believe verse 9 and verse 7 is somehow connected.

Because if you read chapter 13, I think all these things there's a progression there. But I think because the people, they fail to consider and they fail to imitate. Therefore, they will easily be carried away by strange and varied teaching.

Because in verse 7 it says, those who spoke to us, they spoke what? The Word of God. So there's a check there. Those who minister to us, what they minister to us.

If they're ministering the Word of God, we better think about that. Consider it and imitate their faith. If we do that, then we'll be solidly planted in the Word of God.

We will not be easily taught to and fro by varied teaching. And for us to do that, it will take some discipline. Because we all have a sense of curiosity.

We're always looking for something new, especially in the Western world. Like the cars we have in this country. Every year we have to have a new model.

Something new. And we are always caught by something new. Something new.

And we are trapped by it. And of course verse 8 says, Jesus Christ is the same. Yesterday, today and forever.

He's unchanging. So why looking for something new? If there's anything new, it's in the Lord Jesus. Apart from Him, there's nothing new.

And He's always the same. Of course to us, He's new to us. But He's always the same.

And I think we can move up a bit further. I think this is a challenging one. Verse 13.

Verse 13. Hence, let us go out to Him out of the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we do not have a lasting city.

We are seeking the city which is to come. Nothing permanent down here. No root down here.

We are pilgrims and strangers here. And our citizenship is heaven. That would take some revolutionary thinking on our part to change that mentality that we don't belong here.

Our root is in heaven. That would take some change within. Some discipline.

But anyway, let's dwell on verse 13. Let us go out to Him out of the camp, bearing His reproach. The Lord's love to us is sacrificial love.

And He desires us to love Him with the same kind of love. We heard this morning He's looking for that first love. That pure love.

And as Father Lance many years told us, only love can satisfy God. But if we love the Lord as the Lord Jesus loved the Father, the last stretch of His life is out of the camp. From Jerusalem to Golgotha, while He hangs on the cross.

On the cross, He displays God's supreme love. By being rejected by men. And He was crucified.

So brothers and sisters, if we want to be true followers of the Lord, that is the mark of our love. Are we willing to go outside the camp and suffer His reproach? I think in this connection, I just want to read a little song. I'm sure you know very well.

Because there is an added verse translated from the Chinese. So I think I'll just read this. I think this song will speak better than I can.

The title of this song is Many Crowd the Savior's Kingdom. I want to be familiar with that song. Many Crowd the Savior's Kingdom.

Many crowd the Savior's Kingdom. Few receive His cross. Many seek His prize and honor.

Few would suffer loss. For the dear sake of the Master. Counting all things.

Counting all but drops. For the dear sake of the Master. Counting all but drops.

That's verse one. And to me, that means this person who wrote this poem, he knows what it means to go outside the camp. And bear the reproach of the Lord.

Verse two. Many long to share His glory. We all want that.

We all love that. Few will bear His shame. That we'll avoid.

Many long to share His power. Few will suffer loss. Almost none would for His kingdom count their all as drops.

Verse three. Many sit at Jesus' table. Few walk fast with Him.

When the sorrow cup of anguish trembles to the brim. Few watch with Him in the garden who hath sung the hymn. Many will confess His wisdom.

Few embrace His shame. Many should He smile upon them will His praise proclaim. Then if for a little while He leave them, they desert His name.

That's all we are. And last verse. For the soul who loved Him truly.

Let war come and blitz. This will count their dearest heart's blood. Not their own, but His.

Savior, Thou who dost love me, give me love like this. Savior, Thou who dost love me, give me love like this. And I think that is the challenge of this particular verse.

Are we willing to go out to the house of the camp and to bear His reproach? And I think that's something which we all have to learn. Brothers and sisters. That is a real ultimate proof of discipleship.

The ultimate mark of our devotion to Him. It's not just in the camp. Are we willing to go outside the camp and suffer the reproach of Christ? And therefore, very few will pay the cost.

Brothers and sisters, God's standard will not change. Whether we pay now or somehow we have to pay later. So brothers and sisters, it's really worthwhile while in this life we encourage one another to love the Lord and follow Him fully.

All right. Let's move on to another verse. Verse 16.

And do not neglect doing good and sharing for which with such sacrifices God is pleased. To share what you have is not easy because we are all selfish people. We all want to keep things for ourselves.

But if you have surplus, if you have extra things, you won't mind. But if you have just one thing and for that one thing to share with someone you love, it's not so easy. You know the story about the feeding of 5,000.

I think that's the principle. It's when we give it up, God multiplies and that takes some discipline. To give up your very life, your livelihood, it's when you give it up, the Lord adds and He supplies.

Well, verse 17. Verse 17. I think it's come home to all of us now.

17. I think we encounter this in most of our fellowship because there's always murmuring complaint about those who are in the place of leadership. Obey your leaders and submit to them for they keep watch over your soul.

As those who will give an account, let them do this with joy, not with greed. For this will be unprofitable for you. I think this is a universal problem.

Leadership in every locality is often the ones who will be criticized because it's impossible to please everybody. But thank God for those who are diligent, desiring to serve the Lord and to serve His people. If you desire to serve the Lord with a whole heart, you'll be misunderstood.

That is a price you have to pay. Even you do the right thing, you will still be misunderstood. And so for those who do have some spiritual responsibility, that is the cost you have to count.

That is a discipline you have to go through. Not react. Even though you're criticized and people complain about you, and yet in a loving way, you should learn to control yourself.

One of the fruit of the Spirit, the last fruit of the Spirit is self-control. You don't react to criticism. You don't react to murmuring.

You don't react to accusation. Even they are true, you have to take it in. Give all the Lord.

That is a proof of leadership and that is a real mark of self-discipline. How you react to one another. The list of things we share in Hebrew 13, natural love will not suffice.

Only God's love can do it. So God knows how necessary it is for us to cast ourselves at the mercy of the Holy Spirit, that only His love can come through. So the mark of a self-disciplined life is a giving life.

It's a life of sacrifice. It's a life that asks no return. It's a lay down life.

That is self-discipline. Now we do have some questions this afternoon. And if I get stuck, we have a lot of helpers here.

But sometimes our helpers are very reluctant in helping us. I've already asked one or two and they say, oh no, no, no. But anyway, I'll do my best.

And if my answer is not satisfactory, you let me know. Then I'll refer to others. Okay? So do not hesitate to let me know if you're not satisfied with the answer.

Then I'll call on the other brothers and sisters. We have a lot of helpers here. Okay? So since we are talking about self-discipline and sacrificial love, I think they'll be willing to sacrifice for the brothers and sisters.

Okay. I think I will answer this question first. And I think this is a good question.

Before I read this question to you, just share one personal thing. Some of you know my father. He's been serving the law for some time.

Can you hear? Not too good. Okay. I'll speak a bit louder.

But those who know him, someone said he's a task master. If you go to visit him in the Philippines, if he knows that you are coming, before your arrival, he already arranged meetings after meetings for you. And so before I go, I know what to expect.

Because he's not only my father, but also I respect his spiritual authority. So whenever I go, I learn to obey. I learn to submit.

To me, brothers and sisters, it is a necessary lesson. We have to be asked to do things we cannot do or we don't want to do. Then we learn.

When you ask to do things you know you cannot do, thank God for that. Because you can only cast yourself at the mercy of God. Say, Lord, if it's not of you, there's nothing I can do.

So brothers and sisters, the last two, three years, that's one thing I learned, is that when I'm pressed to the corner, I have nowhere to turn. I just turn to the Lord. And brothers and sisters, every time I turn to the Lord, he came through.

I remember this last December when I went to the Philippines, they have their year-end meeting, special meeting. And they have four days of special meetings for the young people as well as four special meetings in the evening, meetings in the evenings for the entire gathering. And as I shared with my father, how to conduct those meetings and who's going to take on responsibility, that you know, brothers and sisters, ended up that I had to assume all four young people's meetings as well as all four meetings for the entire church.

And in the midst of those meetings, I came down with a sore throat. My voice was almost gone. But brothers and sisters, it's in that condition that we experience that the grace of the Lord is sufficient.

That requires some self-discipline. The easiest thing is to excuse ourselves. Now I don't feel good.

Now I have a sore throat. Get somebody to replace me. But as you move by faith, exercise some self-discipline and believing that God's strength is sufficient and his grace is enough, then you really know what it means to live by his life.

Otherwise, we'll never learn. Now you remember Brother Kong shared with this gathering for many times. When he was young with Brother Ni, even on the Lord's Day, Brother Ni would just send a little note and no warnings.

You know, if the note says, I come, then Brother Ni will speak. Right? If the note says, you go, then Brother Kong has to speak. And that note always comes just the last minute.

Brothers and sisters, that is a discipline like, always be ready. Always be on the alert. Always be watchful.

Always be prepared. And I think that's very challenging. Not just for ministry, but for all phases of our Christian living.

Be on the alert. Always be watchful. So I thank God for those who are above me.

And sometimes they ask me to do things that I don't want to do. But I learn to do in love and service. And that's how we learn Christ.

Okay, now let's get to this question here. In the Christian walk, is there a place for good habits? For example, prayer time, systematic Bible study, and witnessing. Brothers and sisters, as Christians, we have to cultivate good habits.

God put Adam and Eve in a garden of Eden and asked them to cultivate. To work, to cultivate, to guard, to dress. And it was to live a disciplined life.

If the garden is to be properly cared for, they had to exercise some discipline. There's a timing for carrying things. Now, I don't know about you, dear, but we are very poor.

We do not know how to take care of those household plants. Some people give them to us, but within a few months they all die. We just don't know how to take care of them.

But I know there's a timing. There's a timing. You only can water your plant so many times a week, or once a week, or twice a week.

And so, just so much. Not too much, not too little. Just so much at a certain time.

And brothers, because we do not have that kind of a habit, that kind of a cultivation, we ruin those things. And that takes discipline. That takes discipline.

So we are to live a cultivated life. We have to cultivate good habits. So brothers, prayer time.

Yes, we need to set aside time for prayer. If you don't set aside time for prayer, you will never have time for prayer. You have to set aside time for reading your Bible, or you'll never have time to read Bible.

As one brother says, we do not... How did he put it? You do not find time, but you buy time. You do not find it, you buy it at a cost. Because there's always something to do around the house.

The moment you wake up, there are many things to be done around the house. But you have to buy time to spend time with the Lord. And it's when you buy time and spend time with the Lord, those times are precious.

So brothers, we need to cultivate good habits. To learn, to pray, and to study the Bible. And as far as witnessing too, I think we ought to cultivate.

I think we have neglected that area of witnessing to the end. So I think we need to cultivate that. I think Brother Dan has shared with young people in Singapore some of these vital things, fighting the good fight, is that you have to determine in your heart that so once a week or so forth, you will witness to one person.

I think sometimes it's necessary. For those who are lazy like me, sometimes you have to discipline yourself to do some of those things, by the grace of God, by the grace of God. Now, I have to confess, I share some of these questions with some brothers.

And of course, this systematic way of reading the Bible, of course, has to be, you know, daily. If possible, in my recent experience, if some of those small books in the Bible, don't read just one chapter. If it's just

two or three chapters, why not read through the whole book? You get a better picture.

That's my experience. Because when I was in school teaching, I only read a small portion. Now I have more time, so I have read many chapters.

And you have a different perspective altogether. So we need to cultivate reading our Bible systematically. Now, the next part of the question is, in other words, is there a place for method? Now, I really don't know what really means by method.

Method means one chapter a day, or one book a day, or whatever that means. But I think we ought to read it in light, as the Holy Spirit enables us to read and to digest. I think the important thing is to read, that we can draw light from the Lord, receive light from him.

So I think in this connection, I would suggest, brothers and sisters, to those who do not have this book, I think the Search Ye the Scripture by Fr. Neate is a very good book to look into. That book has many ways that we can approach and read the Bible.

So I would suggest that. And then the last phase of this question is that, is our walk with the Lord totally spontaneous as in charismatic experience? Let me read it again. Maybe we can get it clearer.

The answer is no. Because if you just let things go, then there's no discipline. And spiritual life is a disciplined life.

I think Brother Spark put it this way. To be filled with the Spirit is basically Spirit-controlled. I think that answers all the questions.

And Spirit, God's Spirit is a spirit of order, not a spirit of confusion. So it cannot be just anything and everything. So I think that is a good thing to remember.

To be filled by the Spirit is really Spirit-controlled. Now, is the answer satisfactory? If not satisfactory, then we can refer to the other brothers. If you have any questions, we can come back to it.

This question, how can we be sure when it's the Holy Spirit speaking or when it's our flesh, ourself? How can we be sure? Now, the answer is that experience will tell us. This is not something you can find out from a book. It's that as you walk with the Lord, you learn to walk in the Spirit.

And the Spirit will tell you whether you are in the Spirit or you're in the flesh. Or otherwise, you will never know. Another thing is that we have the Word of God.

The Word of God is Spirit. So if what we share does not agree with the Scripture, then we know it's not the Spirit. So we have the Word of God.

And I think the next thing is that we have the Church to confirm whether we are in the Spirit or not. You probably share, cannot edify the brothers and sisters, and the Church, I believe Church has wisdom because Church is linked up with the head. Something wrong with the member, the head knows and the body knows as well.

So I think this is not a matter of teaching, but this is a matter of experience. As you live in the Spirit, as you live in the body of Christ, intuitively, you will know by experience. So it's something that we cannot teach, we cannot learn by a book.

It's by your walk with the Lord, in love and obedience, in submission, and we learn. Okay, we can go to the next question. Can you give any guidance on telling the difference in our walk, in our heart, sorry.

Can you give any guidance on telling the difference in our hearts between prompting by the Spirit in our own personal compulsion? That is, compulsion, discipline of the Spirit versus compulsive discipline. The prompting of the Holy Spirit is always very gentle because the Holy Spirit is like a dove. He will never force His way into us.

He always seeks our cooperation. So that's one of the markers of the Holy Spirit. He will never force His way into us, but He will come in a very gentle way and in a very persistent way, but not in force, not forcing His way in.

But He is very persistent. But on the other hand, anything out of self is always very strong. You know, self is very strong.

It will come through in force. It will just come right in. So I think we can tell the difference is in the Spirit and the flesh.

The Spirit is always gentle and always inwardly to seek our Spirit to cooperate with Him. He never forces His way into us. So I think the prompting of the Holy Spirit is always gentle.

For example, I know we all experienced during the worship time, many times the Holy Spirit prompted us that we should pray and worship. Many, many times. But somehow we just ignore the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

And yet, later when we walk out, we ask the Lord for forgiveness, we still have peace. Even if we have quenched the Spirit, but He never forced. He never makes us so uncomfortable.

He will only go so far. If you are not willing to cooperate, you say, all right, maybe next time. So therefore the Holy Spirit is very patient.

He did not succeed. If He did not succeed this time, He will try again. And He will keep trying until you give in to Him.

That is the word of the Holy Spirit. Now we have one more question. This was just handed to me a few minutes ago.

And I'll read the question here. In Hebrews 12, 10, the writer indicates that the objective of discipline is so that we may share His holiness. Would you please elaborate on what it means to share His holiness? Let's look at that verse to read it together.

Hebrews 12, 10. For they discipline us for a short time, seem best to them, but He disciplines us, or God disciplines us, for our good, that we may share His holiness. Yesterday we shared about the purpose of God's discipline.

God's discipline is to bring many sons to glory. All the sons, like His beloved son, share His same nature. That means share His holiness.

Share His glory. According to the Romans, we are told, we are not only called, but we are justified and sanctified. And the end is what? Is glorification.

God alone is glory. According to Romans, we have a share in His glory. Therefore, we are created in His image and His likeness.

So therefore, we have the potential to share His holiness. And so, Brother and Sister, I think it's quite clear. Therefore, discipline is necessary so that Christ Himself can be incorporated into us.

So why the discipline? So that Christ may be formed in us. So as we shared yesterday, when we are disciplined, we know we are loved. When we are disciplined, we know we are in the family.

Now, if you are in the family, you bear the image of the Father. So when you see the Son, you see the Father. And because the Father wants you to be like Him, therefore, He disciplined you so that you can reflect Him and can be like Him.

So therefore, discipline is for sonship. And sonship is to be like Him, the Lord Jesus. So we know that God is family God.

He loves His begotten Son. But He also likes to have many sons, to fill the whole creation with sons. So Brother and Sister, so it's a very, very wonderful thing to know that whatever we are going through in this life, in the end, it's glory because it's sonship.

So I think in this verse, I think it's quite clear that to share means to enter into fellowship, something in common. So what He has is ours. All that is of Him is for us.

But to enter into all that is His, we need to be disciplined. We need to be taught. We need to be instructed, we need to be corrected, to be strengthened, to be changed, to be adjusted, so therefore, we can fit into Him.

So I think that's part of the discipline that we go through. And I think this life we have on this earth is a life of discipline. From the day we're born again to the day we see the Lord's face, will be a continuous life of discipline because God is a perfect God.

God is God of fullness and He will not lower His standard. Thank God for that. We have the Holy Spirit who is working all these things out for His purpose and for His glory.

Now, are you satisfied with some of these answers? If you're not, please let me know so we can refer to the others. Yes. Yeah.

Yes. Yeah, sure. I think the question he referred to is our normal walk with the Lord.

Our normal walk with the Lord. And I think in your case could be an exceptional situation. So somehow, God, and He comes in and intervenes in your situation.

Maybe someone else can answer that question. Now, I think the question that was asked, I think, is our daily normal walk with the Lord. And I think there are cases that are exceptional.

In the sovereignty of God, He allows those things to happen. And therefore, He treats those things in a very special way. But you don't have that experience every day.

You only have that experience that one occasion, for that one particular case. So it's not a normal, everyday thing. It's a very special thing the Lord allows us to go through.

Well, someone wants to respond to... Brother Ernie, do you want to respond to that? Yeah. Yeah. Yes.

Brother Ernie, how about you respond? Yeah, you don't have to. I think that what our brother shared with us has to do with the matter of discipline. Sometimes what we view to be spontaneous is actually a result of discipline that was a part of our life previously.

Sometimes we may not see it as a fruit of something that had happened previously in our lives. So I think that probably there is a thought among some of us that the Christian life is a spontaneous matter where we don't have to be in a place where the Lord is dealing in our lives and imparting Christ to us and these kind of things. But we somehow, the Holy Spirit just comes upon us and just always, supernaturally, works through us.

Now certainly, there will be times when I think that will happen. As our brother said, I think those are, for the most part, exceptional. But when we are talking about a daily walk with the Lord, most of the beneficial things that come out of our life will be a result of the discipline that we have yielded to through the Holy Spirit's work in this way as well.

Some of the examples that our sister gave about this experience that she had, certainly that is an exceptional case that our brother said. And we can also, whatever gift that God has given us, there's discipline in the use of those. It's possible for us to have a gifting and it not be exercised.

I forget the other thing she's talking about, being able to speak in spiritual language. Paul said in the Corinthian letter that he spoke in tongues more than all of the Corinthian believers and they were apparently doing quite a bit of it themselves. So he must have disciplined himself even in the use of that particular gift.

But that, I don't think, is just a rule out of us that when the need is present for us, that our God is able to manifest Himself in a miraculous way. But I think all of us feel like we're having to live on that level. It's got the powerful, full speed ahead all the time and I just don't believe that's possible.

Yes, maybe I'll just conclude. Christian life is not just individual life. It's basically a corporate life.

For example, this afternoon, three o'clock, you want to be here, you have to be here at three o'clock. That is discipline. On the Lord's Day, you have to meet at a certain place.

Well, that is a discipline. We have to go to a certain place to meet with the saints at a certain time. You can just go and say, oh, I feel I have to go now and you've got to be nobody there.

That's what we mean by discipline. Church life is a discipline life. For example, prayer meeting, during some weekday, week evening, you have to be there at a certain time to be praying.

Now, remember in Richmond, England, they're very, very strict. If you're late for the prayer time, the door will be locked. You better be on time.

That is part of discipline. I think in this country, we are lacking in that. We need to be disciplined as God's people.

And in concluding, there's one chapter that is, you find the marks of discipline. That is 1 Corinthians 13. Has all the gifts, all the manifestations, everything, Paul said, there are nothing but if there's no one, no sacrificial love.

That is the mark of a discipline life. A life in the Spirit. It's just the love of God overflowing Him and through Him.

So I think that is most important. So should we just bow our heads? Our Father, we do thank you that we are so inadequate. Lord, so small, but you are so big, so great.

So we just ask that you increase our capacity, Lord, to know you. But Lord, to know you, Lord, to increase our capacity, you must do all the adjustment. Lord, make us a people that are willing to be adjusted and readjusted again and again, Lord, until we can fit into what you desire us to fit into.

Lord, the image of Lord Jesus. Lord, we thank you for this time that we can share one another. Lord, we just commit ourselves to you.

We praise thee. We thank you for the Holy Spirit who is doing what humanly, what we humanly cannot do. And so we just ask the Holy Spirit to take charge and take what's been shared and work in our hearts.

Lord, I do teach us how to love you, how to obey you, how to submit to you, and Lord, how to live a life as a living sacrifice that your heart may be satisfied. We give praise, give thanks in the precious name of Lord Jesus.

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