

Week of Meetings 05 Father's govt.and Family

by John W. Bramhall

The sermon emphasizes the importance of discipline in the family of God, highlighting the Father's government, self-discipline, church discipline, and the Father's righteous judgment.

Duration: 44:39

Scripture: 1 Peter 1:14

Topics: "Obedience To God", "Heart Transformation"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being conscious that God is judging us every day. He encourages believers to be obedient children and to live holy lives, as the Father calls His children to obedience. The preacher also highlights the power and effectiveness of the Word of God in searching and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. He urges listeners to submit themselves to the authority of the Word and allow it to expose and transform their innermost being. The sermon references the book of Hebrews and the epistle of John to support these teachings.

Transcript

Fullest kinds, the heavenly needs, the word of God. Let me encourage, not only come yourself, bring others and invite them, at least give them an invitation to come and hear his word. We read tonight in 1 Peter, beginning at verse 14, Peter writing by the Spirit, as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the form of lust in your ignorance, but as he which hath called you, if holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.

Because it is written, be ye holy, for I am holy. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of person judges according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear. For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who by him do believe in God that raised him up from the dead and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.

May God's Spirit bless the reading of his word, may the same blessed Spirit give the ministry of the word for every conscience and for every heart. There are two things that we always need. We need the word of God to spur the conscience, and we need the word of God to cheer and to encourage the heart.

May the Spirit of God do that. We've had the privilege of noting from the word of God the revelation of God as Father came only through and by the person of his Son. We rejoice in the fullness of the revelation that by the words, the works, the life, and the death of the Lord Jesus, the Father has been fully redeemed.

We've had the privilege of noting that he is obtaining his children out of this world, and through the Savior, and the chastity work of that blessed shepherd who died for us seeking the love, that blessed one not only redeemed the Father to mankind, but he is bringing the family home to the Father. We rejoice for every one that he finds. We think of the parable that he told of the lost sheep, which when he has found it, he places it upon his shoulders and carries it home rejoicing.

We trust that everyone in our audience is upon his shoulders being carried home to the Father's glory above, where the family will ultimately be. We've had also the privilege of seeing the divine divisions of the family. I would not waste my time talking about the human divisions of the family, which we regret, but we rejoice that the family is one.

Every born-again child of God is in his family, and he alone has given the divisions of the family, as we saw last evening, that threefold division, grading them according to their spiritual development as being father, or young men, or as little children. I commend to your heart and conscience, as well as to my own, the deep exercise to ask God, and in his presence search your heart to say, Father, where do I belong in the family growth? Am I just a child, an infant in the faith? Have I grown and developed in the spiritual faith of God? Am I a young man in that spiritual attainment that there is spiritual strength, the word of God abides within me? The overcoming of the evil one is being enjoyed, or have I recently a father in the family, having gone on, pressed on, occupying with Christ and growing in his knowledge to reach that mature attainment of being called by the Father, one of the Fathers within his family? Tonight, we'd like to speak upon the subject relating to the Father and his family of the Father's government over the family. The Father's government of his family, for it is an important principle that Scripture teaches that the Father governs and deals with every member of his family in his own governmental way.

The need of discipline in relation to the believer should always be recognized. Though today it is little appreciated, as well as very little practiced, but the word of God speaks of various forms of discipline. First of all, let me mention briefly there is what could be called, and is in the word of God suggested, as being self-discipline, the discipline of one's self.

You may recall, some of you, that writing to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians chapter 11, the beloved apostle said in verse 31, if we should or would judge ourselves, then we would not need to be judged. It is the principle of the believer disciplining himself and herself, searching his and her own heart and life to maintain his and her fellowship with God properly. And self-discipline will avoid the discipline that must come from God when we are disobedient.

Then there is taught in Corinthians, the same epistle, chapter 5, what we call church discipline, something very little known in practice today, but which is of great importance in relation to the church. Where in the assembled company of the believers, every believer should realize he and she is under the disciplinary action of that local church authorized as such by the Holy Scripture. And this is a neglected ministry, for each believer should realize he and she is to be subject to this in order to maintain the holiness of God's house.

Now, we shall see, but let me emphasize it at this point. We shall see that the whole purpose of discipline, as we shall see it tonight, over the family, is to produce holiness in the child of God. The purpose of

assembly or church discipline is to produce holiness in the house of God.

But, whether we fail in self-discipline, whether we may come short in assembly or church discipline, I can assure you the father over every one of his children will never fail in his fatherly discipline. There is not one of his children that the father will fail in respect to his governmental authority over his children to deal with them when needful. The father is faithful to thus recognize the need of his children, and never to fail as a father over the family to deal with each one.

We may fail, you and I may fail in parental authority in the realm of our own family relationships, but the father above will never fail in his governmental relationship and responsibility to every one of his children. Now, may I point out to you that the twofold purpose for the disciplinary action of the father over the children. First of all, to correct the children, to chasten or to correct when his children may be in need of correction and discipline because of their disobedience.

But, we sometimes miss the other purpose. The father is not only ready, willing, as well as faithful to discipline and chasten when necessary, but he is just as faithful to reward his child. For, though disobedience may meet the discipline of the father, obedience will always receive the commendation and the blessing of the father.

So, when you realize the governmental authority of the father over the family, let us recognize one purpose is to correct his children, and the second to reward them for their obedience. There are two factors that are involved in the action of the father toward his children in this discipline. First of all, the honor of the father is involved.

His own honor, the honor of the father himself is involved. For, the father desires to maintain the true character of holiness in his child. Can I repeat that? No apology for the repetition.

Truth that is well worth repeating should be repeated. The discipline of the father over his children is to maintain his own honor, that his own character of holiness may be maintained in the lives of his children. And then, not only is the father's honor involved, but the happiness, the joy, and the blessing of his children is involved.

For, he desires the happiness of his beloved children. You know, it's a strange fact. The parent knows, and should know, more than the child.

And, many a time, disciplinary action in an earthly family may not be understood by the child, but the interest, and the loving interest, and the thankful interest of the parent is concerned for the happiness and for the joy of his own child. The child may not realize it, but the parent that properly disciplines has the child's welfare at heart. So does the father in heaven.

Now, look at our scriptures tonight as we go to Peter. For, Peter, as well as other apostles, mentions the relationship of the father in the family, and in this particular portion brings before them the governmental discipline of the father. But, first of all, let's see the principle of his government, and the claims of the father in this section.

Verse 14, 15 and 16. The father calls his children to obedience. As obedient children, not passioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation or living, because it is written, be ye holy for I am holy.

The father calls his children to obedience. May I insert right here some truth that we haven't time to cover in detail from the epistle of John, but may I insert some facts regarding what the father wants, what he should have from his children that embodies the obedience required. You will find in 1st John chapter 2, or chapter 3 rather, in verse 9, that one characteristic that father desires to see in his child is this.

John says, we do not practice sin. We do not practice sin, and that is one characteristic that should feature every child of God. He also says in 1st John 2 and 29, the positive side of that fact, we practice righteousness.

We do righteous things. We practice righteousness, and that is a feature that the father desires to see in every one of his children. Not practicing sin, but practicing right living.

My beloved, you and I have no right to live any way we wish. When we are the children of God, the father's desire is to see his own likeness in us. Do not practice sin, practice righteousness.

Right living, practical righteousness. And then, if I recall correctly, in 1st John chapter 3 verse 14, John declares, hereby we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. And, in the context, John is describing the fact that one of the evidences that the children of God is, they love one another.

And, my beloved, to love one another as the children of God is one of the features of the father himself, for God is love. And, we should lay down our life for our brethren. That's the standard of that love that the father requires.

I think we read also, in the fifth chapter of that epistle, briefly telling it, that we should overcome the world. He that is born of God overcomes the world, and who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the son of God. And, one can recognize these are the few but important responsibilities to produce the characteristic features of the father, his likeness in his children.

You know, one of the greatest joys is when your children may look like you, I hope, but that is one great joy of an earthly parent. The likeness and the features of the parent, the family resemblance. And, my beloved, the family likeness of the father in his character.

He wants to see in you and me, and his obedient children. Peter says, not passioning yourselves according to your former lusts as you once did in your ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of living, for it is written, be ye holy for I am holy. The father's desire is obedience.

The father's pattern is his holiness, and I cannot minimize that standard. I dare not. You may say it's unattainable.

Perhaps, but you better seek to go after that same pattern, though, and grow in grace, and seek to develop practical sanctification of life, holiness of living, and the responsibility is given to us. So be ye holy. Now, I know I'll never reach perfection down here, never.

Dear friend wrote me many years ago. He had retired and gone to California for the days of his retirement, and became dissatisfied with California, and he wrote me and said, John, can you tell me where the best assembly is in Florida? Where the best climate is in Florida? Where the best place would be to stay in Florida? And I wrote back and said, Jim, what you're looking for is heaven, and we realize we do not, we

cannot, we shall not reach the perfection that shall be ours when we are changed in that moment we see the Lord Jesus at his coming. But, my beloved, be ye holy as I am holy, saith the Lord.

Holiness of life should be developed. Now, note with me, then, in verse 17 of our chapter, that this responsibility comes under the discipline of the judgment of the Father. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect a person judges according to every man's work, hast the time of your soul journeying here in fear.

Now, beloved, you and I, you were saying we call upon the Father. The Lord Jesus said to his own, as we have seen, you have come to the Father, you know the Father, you've seen the Father, you've seen me, therefore you've seen the Father. And we call on the Father, and what a joy it is to call in Abba Father.

If ye call on the Father, will you know what follows? The Father without respect a person judges according to every man's work. Now, I want to be very careful to make clear the distinction of the Father being the judge. I know that it is written in John 5 22, the words of the Lord Jesus say, the Father judges no man but has committed all judgment unto the Son.

And, as you continue on in John 5, the Lord Jesus speaks of that coming day of judgment when he as judge will be the judge of all mankind in that future day. That what Peter is writing about is not a future judgment. Peter is writing a present day judgment by the Father of his children.

What would you think of a father that paid no attention to his children? The Father in heaven is distinctly concerned about the conduct of his children. My beloved, I say this to my soul, to my conscience, what I have been today, what I have done today, my father has been interested in, and noted for his observance of the believer and of his children, his conscience. And my father packs a daily judgment on what I do, and upon what I am, as well as upon what I said.

So, with regard, we realize it is a present judgment, and day by day, and moment by moment, the Father is watching his children. You know, we like to think he watches over me day and night, but I wonder if we realize he not only watches over us for caring, and preserving, and protecting, but he's watching what we are, and what we do, and what we say. It's a present judgment, continuing moment by moment in the family of God.

Then, I want you to note, it's not only a present judgment, it is a righteous judgment. Now, you note this 17th verse. If he call on the Father, who, without respect to persons, there's no partiality in his judgment.

And, may I say, my beloved brother and sister, the Father doesn't show any partiality to thee above you, and vice versa. No partiality to his children. It is a righteous judgment.

Now, this affects us daily. This affects us in our present life, and then you know the third thing. Note the basis of his judgment in the same verse.

He judges according to every man's worth, according to every man's worth, or according to the work of each one. Oh my beloved, what a responsibility is his! How many children does he have? I don't know. I know they're numberless as far as human computation, but the children of God who are in the family, every one of them, are daily being discerned by him and judged by him according to the work of each.

Now, listen brother and sister, this is not a future judgment. This is a present one. When we stand before the judgment seat of Christ, it will not be the Father, it's going to be Christ himself who'll be the judge.

When the dead shall be laid at the last judgment before the great white throne, Christ himself will be the judge. But, this is the disciplinary judgment, and discernment, and the righteous discernment of the Father over his children in the present time. Every word, every thought, every deed, every motion of the heart and life, he discerns.

May I insert a fact that comes to my soul and my mind at this moment? Look, many times, and likely, we bring before the hearts of God's people the coming day of the judgment seat of Christ. We take the holy scriptures concerning that day when the saints shall stand before him, and their life will be brought before him in review, and the gold, and the silver, and the precious stone, and the wood, and the hay, and the stubble will be manifested, and every man's work, his and her testimony for their Christian life, will be thus reviewed, rewarded, or the loss of reward will be involved. My beloved, may I say, if you and I as children of God were more deeply conscious that the Father is judging us every day, we shall fare better at the judgment seat of Christ.

Thus to the obedient children, and thus to let every word, every thought, even today, every deed, every motive of the heart and life be under his discerning eye, and the consciousness that I'm responsible to my Father for what I am, and what I do. You see, how am I going to be able to do that? Well, let me give you the words of the Hebrew writer in chapter 4 and verse 12 and 13. When the apostle wrote, saying, for the word of God is living, and effective, powerful, and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul, and of the spirit, and the joints, and the marrow, and is as external as the thoughts, and the intense of the heart.

For all things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do. My beloved, this is what God suggests. If you and I will submit ourselves in obedience to his word, and to the authority and the searching power of this word, it will search the motives of our hearts.

It will discern not only the motives of the heart, but it will also discern the thoughts of the mind. And all things will be naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do. And you and I will be walking in this present scene as his children, who, in obedience to his word, would seek to be faithful, in knowing the Father watches, the Father discerns, the Father is just.

You know there's one thing about that Father there, in the glory. You may have to tell him sometimes what you've done, but if you never tell him, he knows it. There may be things you may fail to tell him, he knows them.

There's no one of privilege to see if only the heart, and the soul, and the life of his child has lived in the light of the Father's conscious, conscious presence, and authority, and government over him. I remember years ago, my good brother and friend Alfred Loisio and I were talking together, as often we did when in his home together. We chatted for hours over the word of God again and again, and I recall we were talking together concerning some subject of this character, and he looked at me on one occasion that morning, and he said, Brother Van Horne, he said, there are some things that I would be afraid to do, because I'm afraid my father would smack me down.

Let's read on. Look in this chapter, look in this verse. You know what the beloved apostle says at the end of the verse.

Did he call on the Father, who, without respect to person, judges according to every man's work, cast the time of your sojourning here in fear? You say afraid of the Father? No. Then what is the fear? My beloved,

the fear of grieving his heart, the fear of grieving that great heart of love, fear that springs from the consciousness my father is holy, and to recognize that character of my father, and I'm his son, I'm his child. How necessary, then, to spend the time of my pilgrimage on the earth in fear.

Now, don't be afraid of that word. Reverential fear. Not the terror of the heart and the mind.

Afraid of that, for God forbid. The Lord Jesus said, I go to my father and your father. My father is now your father, and the spirit of his son has been sent into our hearts, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

My beloved child of God, may I encourage you, as well as my own heart, never hesitate to come to the Father, no matter what you've done. The sooner you come to him, the better, if you've done something wrong. Cast the time of your sojourning in your pilgrimage here in fear.

Oh my beloved, I'm so glad I have a father like that. I'm so grateful. Here is a father whose character, holiness indeed, commends the responsibility of his child to be his obedient one.

My, how many parents would love to have obedient children? You know it's a strange thing when you get a bunch of children together and seek to talk with them, as I've done in the past. It's a strange thing. I've often asked the question of them, how many of you know how to be naughty? And every hand goes up, every hand goes up.

My beloved, what a joy it is to realize the Father desires you and I to be his obedient children. When we walk with the Lord in the light of his word, what a glory he sheds on our way while we do his good will. He abides with us still, and with all who will trust and obey.

Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey. Oh beloved, look with me at verse 18 through 21 in the closing moment. I wanted to see why the Father claims this, for his claims are an honesty, and the claim of the Father is based upon the infinite redemption, and that infinite price of our redemption that was given.

For as much as ye know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation by tradition from your fathers. Now beloved, note negatively. Peter says, you know you were never redeemed with silver and gold.

All the silver and gold in the world could not redeem you and me, and redemption for the children, redemption for the people of God, could never be bought at the cost of material wealth. All that the world contained could never buy the redemption of the soul. And we have been bought with an infinite price, as he goes on to say, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish, and without strife.

Now, may I point out, verse 18 says, nothing on earth ever bought your redemption. Verse 19 says, heaven brought it for you. Heaven brought the redemption of your soul and mind.

The redemptive price came down from heaven in the person of the Lamb of God, and by the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without strife, you and I have been redeemed. And then, note in verse 20, it was God's eternal purpose that determined he wanted you and me to be his children. As you'll read, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.

You know, one of the greatest truths that blesses my soul beyond expression is when I read that he wanted me before the foundation of the world. What a God! Hallelujah! I want him, but I know I have a God like that. Before the foundation of the world, that blessed Lamb was foreordained, and then manifested, and died upon the cross to bring us to the Father.

Oh beloved, don't you say the Father can't claim what he asks? He can claim it. For that redemption that heaven has provided, verse 21 tells that you and I appropriated it. Who by him do believe in God that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory that your faith and hope might be in God? And, beloved, certainly we can recognize the Father deserves the obedience of his children, and his discipline is upon them and over them to correct or to reward according to the work of each one.

May I say just a word in closing, and commend only the reading, if you wish, at your own convenience of the twelfth chapter of the book of Hebrews, whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. And, when you read that chapter, you will find that the purpose of the Father's chastening of his child is always to make him or her partakers of his own holiness. Nevertheless, now no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but rather grievous.

Nevertheless, afterward his workers, the peaceable fruit of righteousness, to them that are exercised thereby. And, beloved, may I say earnestly, I thank God for his chastening hand. My beloved, may I encourage, though the Father may chasten you in whatever way he chooses, submit to it.

There are three things you could do. You can resist it, or you can run away from it, but if you endure it, you'll get through it quicker and better, and the Father's purpose will be accomplished to produce his own character in your life. Oh, beloved, I'm sure in this audience, many, if not all of us, know something of the chastening of the Father in our lives, and we are grateful to him for it.

It may not be as it is in an earthly sense, but, oh beloved, it is profitable, and the Father's discipline each day you and I should be aware of, and conscious that we are subject to it, and it will maintain the holiness of our testimony better, if we are. May God help us to remember the Father would say to his children, behave yourselves, and what our own parents often said, don't forget whose children you are, as you and I know we belong to him. Shall we pray? Blessed Father, we thank thee for thyself.

We're amazed that we even can call thee Father, and rejoice with joy unspeakable that is through thy grace alone, and the mercy that's been shown in, and by, and through the person of thy dear son, and his meritorious work on Calvary's cause. And we thank thee, Father, every child of thine is the object of thy constant care and watchfulness. Blessed Father, we'd like to acknowledge that sometimes we are disobedient, we humbly confess it, and that with shame.

And Father, we regret you've got so many disobedient children, and we would humbly bow before thee tonight, and ask thee to make thy likeness to be seen more and more in of thy children. Blessed Father, we love thee, and we thank thee for bringing us to thyself through thy beloved son. Tonight, as we bow together, we would say make us more like thyself, to be obedient children, and give thee the joy thou dost desire, to see thy children walking in the truth.

We close with those precious words of John as he wrote them in one of his epistles, I have no greater joy than that my children walk in the truth. We pray, Father, this will be ours tonight, and in the days we may have left for our earthly pilgrimage, to thus show the Father's likeness in our daily walk. We ask it, Father, for thy glory, and Father, we know it is done, we shall be as well as obedient children.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of our Father God, and the fellowship, indeed, and the conviction of the Spirit be upon us, in our Savior's name. Amen.

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