

# TRANSFORMATION



## *Fingerprints of God* *Small Group and Individual Study Guide*

### Week 8

*The Vinedresser: His pruning for your growth.....His Purpose*

#### **Week 8 The Vinedresser will prune us for His delight**

Heb 12:10

"[For they verily for a few days] That is, with reference to a few days pros; or it was a chastisement that had reference mainly to this short life. The apostle seems to bring in this circumstance to contrast the dealings of earthly parents with those of God. One of the circumstances is, that the corrections of earthly parents had a much less important object than those of God. They related to this life-a life so brief that it may be said to continue but a "few days." Yet, in order to secure the benefit to be derived for so short a period from fatherly correction, we submitted without complaining. Much more cheerfully ought we to submit to that discipline from the hand of our heavenly Father which is designed to extend its benefits through eternity. This seems to me to afford a better sense than that adopted by Prof. Stuart and others, that it means "during our childhood or minority;" or than that proposed by Doddridge, that it refers both to our earthly parents and to our heavenly Father.

[After their own pleasure] Margin, "as seemed good, or meet to them." Meaning that it was sometimes done arbitrarily, or from caprice, or under the influence of passion. This is an additional reason why we should submit to God. We submitted to our earthly parents, though their correction was sometimes passionate, and was designed to gratify their own pleasure rather than to promote our good. There is much of this kind of punishment in families; but there is none of it under the administration of God.

[But he for our profit] Never from passion, from caprice, from the love of power or superiority, but always for our good. The exact benefit which he designs to produce we may not be able always to understand, but we may be assured that no other cause influences him than a desire to promote our real welfare, and as he can never be mistaken in regard to the proper means to secure that, we may be assured that our trials are always adapted to that end.

[That we might be partakers of his holiness] Become so holy that it may be said that we are partakers of the very holiness of God; compare 2 Peter 1:4. This is the elevated object at which God aims by our trials. It is not that he delights to produce pain; not that he envies us and would rob us of our little comforts; not that he needs what we prize to increase his own enjoyment, and therefore rudely takes it away; and not that he acts from caprice-now conferring a blessing and then withdrawing it without any reason: it is, that he may make us more pure and holy, and thus promote our own best interest. To be holy as God is holy; to be so holy that it may be said that we "are partakers of his holiness," is a richer blessing than health, and property, and friends, without it; and when by the exchange of the one we acquire the other, we have secured infinitely more than we have lost. To obtain the greater good we should be willing to part with the less; to secure the everlasting friendship and favour of God we should be willing, if necessary, to surrender the last farthing of our property; the last friend that is left us; the last feeble and fluttering pulsation of life in our veins." (from Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database Copyright © 1997, 2003 by BibleSoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)

#### **Based on from above, discuss the following:**

Some people give up "health, property and friends" in order to become "partakers of his holiness" by going into a monastery or convent. Is this necessary? If not, how can you share God's holiness and still live an "ordinary" kind of life in this world?

What phrase or sentence stands out to you in a positive way or what is a "truth" take away from this text?

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##### **John 15:1,2**

He prunes us for our sake  
He prunes us for His delight  
He prunes us to yield more fruit

##### **Hebrews 12:7-11**

We yield fruit once trained by discipline

##### **John 15:16**

His promise, choosing and appointment to bear much fruit

##### **James 3:17-18**

Peaceful fruit of righteousness are results  
Seed of righteousness sown in peace by those who make peace

#### **Based on the Scripture passages, discuss the following:**

John 15:1-2

Have you experienced “pruning” in some area of your life? Was it unpleasant and/or needed at the time? Did you afterward find that you bore more fruit? Share the example.

Hebrews 12:7-11

The outcome of discipline is “righteousness and peace.” Why do you think “peace” is included here? Can you share an experience where God’s discipline has given you greater inner peace as a consequence? What other results have you experienced from God’s discipline?

John 15:16 and 7

What do you think is meant by “fruit that will last?”

In verse 7 we have the promise that our requests or prayers would be answered—on 2 conditions. Here in verse 16 the promise is repeated. Compare the conditions God gives in verse 7 with that in 16.

James 3:17-18

Up until now we have talked about God’s “pruning” or discipline. Here in James we have the phrase “the wisdom that comes from heaven.” Are “discipline” and “wisdom” similar to each other? How are they different?

Do you find it difficult to be a peacemaker? How can you resist the temptation to “stir things up” rather than to “smooth things over?” How can you stand for what you believe is right without “taking sides” in a partisan way? Or how do you “take sides” peacefully or as a witness for Christ?

*Going Deeper*  
*Tweener Time*  
**Week 8**

For your personal devotion time; Read then write your reflection

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Day 1 Read John 15:1-8 and verse 16, then go back and reflect on vs. 2 and 16

Day 2 Read Hebrews 12:1-7, then go back and reflect on v.6

Day 3 Read Titus 2:1-14, then go back and reflect on v.14

Day 4 Read 2 Corinthians 5:1-10, then go back and reflect on v.9

Day 5 Read Hebrews 13:1-25, then go back and reflect on v.21