

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The Lord loves you. The Apostle teaches the signs of that love, that reception: God receives you. God deals with you as sons. In love, our heavenly Father chastens you. He does not delight in this chastening. But He does delight in those whom He chastens. He delights in bringing you to salvation.

He delights in you, dear Christian. So, as a loving Father, He corrects and rebukes. He does it to protect you. He does it to keep you from harm. He does it to warn you of things that will hurt you. He does it that you not stray, that you remain on the Way of Salvation upon which He has placed you. All that is to say that in love, God deals with you as sons.

Chastening is never enjoyable. That's the point. The discomfort caused by the Law, the accusations the perfect Law makes against your fallen flesh, your sinful heart, and your corrupt mind, that correction drives you away from temptation and transgression.

Discipline is designed to be uncomfortable. That is for your good. It fosters true sorrow and contrition, which by God's grace lead to faithful repentance. Repentance is turning away from that which will hurt you. God desires to turn you away from being illegitimate and turn you toward being a son. For there is a sin that leads to death, a sin that will not be forgiven, either in this age or the age to come.

Discipline and punishment are different. The goal of discipline is correction. Punishment results in death. While God disciplines you, in love, to protect you, He does not punish

you, O Blessed Redeemed of Christ. He does not punish you, for your punishment, the just punishment for your sins, death, was visited upon God's Only Son, Jesus Christ your Lord.

God gave His own Son over to death, the sinless Christ who bore your sins was punished, that by faith in Him you be called sons of God. And as a son, God, in love, corrects you and rebukes you, that the salvation Christ won for you not be lost.

To protect you, to train you, to guide you in His Way, to lead you through this life, in love your heavenly Father chastens you. He deals with you as sons. He calls you who were not His people His people. He adopts you, grafting you into forgiveness and life, adding you to the Vine of Righteousness through the washing of regeneration.

He fills you with His Spirit, the Spirit that cries "Abba", Father. That's how a son speaks. He fills you with His Spirit that His kingdom come among you, that His will be done among you, that you receive what true sons receive – the inheritance of the Father. He makes the riches of His Kingdom yours, as a free gift, for His Son's sake. And He bids you pray to Him, calling Him your Father.

Thanks be to God, He deals with you as sons. He bids you dine this day at His Table, that you who partake of His chastening partake of His salvation. He bids you eat and drink heavenly Food. He forgives, strengthens, and preserves you by this Holy Meal.

He places Good Things into you, that from that Good Treasure He bring forth in you good things. He brings forth the confession that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, that out of

the abundance of your heart your mouth speak, and that by your words you be justified. By the Spirit He places in your mouth a saving confession of faith.

The Day of Judgment approaches. It is nearer now than when you first believed. So heed the admonition of the Apostle: do not become weary or discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. But Christ has. He did it for you. He did it that you be made sons of God.

In Christ, you need not fear the Day of Judgment. Your Day of Judgment, dear Christian, was Good Friday. Jesus was judged in your stead. In Him you are declared to be innocent, holy, and reconciled to the Father. And your eternal freedom was declared on Easter morning.

For in Christ, Who will make Himself present for you this morning in Bread and Wine, in Him you are forgiven. In Him you are declared to be righteous. Thanks be to God, the Father of all Mercies deals with you as sons.

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