

Day One: 1 Samuel 2:12-36

1. Describe Priest Eli's sons (12). How did their behavior regarding sacrifices deviate from the norm (13-17)? Meanwhile, what was happening in the lives of Samuel and his family (18-21, 26)? What did Eli learn about his sons, and what did he do about it (22-25)? Summarize what the "man of God" then said to Eli (27-36). How do you think Eli responded to this prophecy?
2. Rather than merely griping about their sins, imagine if Eli had actually disciplined his sons. What might this have looked like? What might have been different about the prophecy? Consider the grave consequences of the sons' sins. Are consequences of sin in your life echoed here? Like Eli, did someone fail to purposefully discipline you? Offer these memories and reflections to the Lord. How does he want to use them for good in your life today?

Day Two: Proverbs 3:11-12, 12:1, 13:24, 15:32, 19:18

1. What should we neither despise nor resent (3:11)? Why (12)? What does the lover of discipline also love (12:1)? Who is stupid (1)? What famous and often misunderstood proverb about discipline is found in chapter 13 (24)? Describe the self-view of those who forsake discipline (15:32). Meanwhile, who gains understanding (32)? Why is it important to discipline your children (19:18)? What are the consequences of failing to do so (18)?
2. Specifically mentioning the Lord, the proverb from chapter 3 creates the context for all the other verses. Re-read them, picturing yourself a child with God as your father. How does this make you feel? Do you love the Lord's correction? When does he use the rod of discipline in your life? When are you tempted to disregard it? Pray you can flee these temptations and praise God for the good in your life that has come as a result of discipline.

Day Three: Matthew 18:15-17

1. What should we do when a fellow disciple sins (15)? What if they do not listen to you (16)? What is the Biblical basis for this (16)? What if they still refuse to listen (17)? What if they then disregard the discipline of the church as a whole (17)? Three failures to heed a rebuke results in exclusion from spiritual community life; what do you think of this? In verse 15, some manuscripts say "sins *against you*." How do those additional words alter the takeaway?
2. At some point, perhaps many, God will use you in order to discipline someone. Do you feel up to this call? Why or why not? Imagine the tables turned: a fellow believer confronting you in your sin. How does this feel? This is a key function of the church: we consistently challenge each other to give our all, at all times, in all areas of life. Pray that both you and others would be willing conduits of this expression of God's love.

Day Four: 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

1. In writing about self-discipline, describe the imagery Paul uses (24). How does Paul want us to run (24)? What precedes competition in the games (25)? Contrast the goal of those who win physical races with those who are running a spiritual race (25). In running and fighting, what does Paul *not* do (26)? What does he do instead (27)? Why does he do this (27)?
2. In your life as a Christian, what comprises the "race"? What exactly is "the prize"? What does it look like to run the race lackadaisically? What does it look like to run it with fierce discipline? Where do you fall on this spectrum? Ask the Lord to replace any aimlessness with tenacity and sharp focus. How do you think he will use the tool of discipline to orchestrate this shift? Pray for grace to thrive during this "strict training."

Day Five: Galatians 6:1-10

1. When someone is "caught in a sin," what does Paul advise we do (1)? How do we fulfill the law of Christ (2)? How do we deceive ourselves (3)? How can comparison be avoided (4-5)? What does Paul want people to do for their spiritual teachers (6)? Who cannot be mocked (7)? Summarize Paul's statements about spiritual reaping and sowing (7-8). When "doing good," what should we resist (9)? Why (9)? What opportunities should we seize (10)?
2. Meditate on verse 8. What does this have to do with discipline? Does it take any discipline at all to please your flesh? Why or why not? What makes it possible to consistently please the Holy Spirit instead? What "strict training" will help to maintain this posture of heart for the long haul? In what areas of your life do you most long to demonstrate that you "sow to please the Spirit"? Ask God that an outpouring of his purposeful discipline would make this so.