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Principles of Christian Growth

Section Two: The Means of Christian Growth – How do we do it?

Lesson Eight: We grow through God's discipline.

Bible Reading: Matt. 6:24-34; Luke 11:9-13; 1 Cor. 11:27-32; Heb. 12:5-13.

God's design for the family unit illustrates the glory of His relationship to His people in wonderful ways. He loved Israel as a wife, and Christ loves His church today as a Bridegroom His bride. We saw in the last study that in order to be Christ-like, we must love His church as He does. Fatherhood is another family blessing that describes God's relationship to His children. Our Savior is the Everlasting Father (Isa. 9:6), and every good gift comes down from our Father of lights (Jam. 1:17). He provides for His children's needs better than the best human fathers do (Luke 11:13). He also disciplines them better (Heb. 12:9). Trusting that provision and discipline are important means of Christian growth.

Discussion questions:

1. The Lord's description of our heavenly Father's fatherhood mentioned another role that every father plays in the life of his child. What is that role, and what temptation must the child of God avoid to honor their Father in that role? (Matt. 6:24). What commands in the passage must we obey in order to avoid that temptation? (vv. 25-34).

2. All sons with good fathers are disciplined (Heb. 12:5-8). Each child of God experiences discipline. Why does the Lord discipline us? (vv. 10-13).

3. It is possible to avoid the Lord's discipline and to enjoy the fullness of his blessing. How so? (Matt. 6:33, Luke 11:9, 1 Cor. 11:31-32).