

- (3) To warn, in general, of the power of the Lord's justice.
 - (4) And to certify the fact that God is working and is exact in His conditioning
- e. This discipline of temporal punishment is not intended to scare us or make us doubt God's love. We know from the book of Job that God does not deal on a "tit for tat" basis and many of the life limitations have nothing to do with punishment but are the mere products on our race. We must be very discerning in any study on these lines but it would be best if we were all quick and eager to do His will!

5. Suffering

- a. By definition this is one of the most difficult disciplines to discuss. This is the training that comes with the limitations of life and the weakness of a body showing the highly developed consequences of sin (Adam's fall...) It has some of the marks of adversity but is not the same thing. It will include aspects of persecution but is more than just that. Perhaps it is easiest to say that whatever hurts one is a matter of suffering.
- b. The character of suffering...
 - (1) rebuke for being a Christian: 1 Peter 4
 - (2) weakness in the flesh: 2 Corinthians 12
 - (3) illness: 3 John (Gaius)
 - (4) any pain producing trial: 1 Peter 5:10
- c. Biblical illustrative matter on the discipline of suffering
 - (1) the Lord Jesus: Hebrews 2:10; 5:8; 12:2
 - (2) all who live godly: 2 Timothy 3:12
 - (3) the servants of faith in God: Hebrews 11
 - (4) the course of life in general: Ecclesiastes 12
- d. The purpose in suffering...well, it is not always possible to define it in exact terms in every situation but some general purposes seem clear:
 - (1) learning dependence
 - (2) preparation for blessing
 - (3) learning to comfort and empathize
 - (4) challenging for new directions