

Our concept is not that of a Father who abuses, but of one who teaches. So in self-defense, if in no other manner, we need to think positively about some of the sure disciplines.

Therefore our purpose in these talks is to see what some of those disciplines are. To try to appreciate how they should help us and to encourage us to trust the Father in the processes of life. The thinking is that...if we know what to expect and what it is to do for us...it may encourage us to be more "cooperative" or "yielded" as the case may be and, in the least, more willing. We may be kept from the despair of ignorance or doubt that can ruin one's peace of mind and joy in spiritual matters.

As mentioned earlier, we cannot do all of these things...but we can sketch some areas for study and, working through these, perhaps learn some helpful items for other areas of closer spiritual development. We are, on the one hand, not to charge God with absurdities and crudities while on the other, not being hard headed and dull.

II. The Discipline of Adversity

Basic Scripture: Hebrews 12

A. Introducing the subject

1. Hebrews 12 begins a short section of exhortation coming after the demonstration of the superiority of the Lord Jesus Christ and the witness that faith is the way to please God. Having laid such adequate groundwork, the apostle now urges the believers to whom he is writing to show a Biblical life in their current circumstances. They have the cloud of witnesses, they have the command of faith, they have the perfect and complete Saviour, and it is their happy privilege to put a grip on these things in a living experience. But, (as noted in 10:32-34) the expression of witness does not always bring applause and sometimes brings real trials.