

Our Theme

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. Luke 2:15–17 (ESV)

1. See the true Christmas story.
2. Tell our friends and community the Christmas story.

Why do Christians suffer?

1. Christians do not suffer to pay for their sin.
2. Sometimes I suffer because sin has consequences.

and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. Romans 1:27 (ESV)

3. Sometimes God brings extra consequences to my sin to break me from my sin.
4. Sometime I suffer not because of sin but because God plans to mature me.

What do I need to know about God's discipline?

1. God disciplines me out of his fatherly love.

Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the Lord your God disciplines you. Deuteronomy 8:5 (ESV)

And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? Hebrews 12:5–9 (ESV)

- **Discipline** - A direct response to sin in my life designed to correct me.
- **Chastise** - The entire range of trials and tribulations which God brings into our life to mortify sin and build faith.
- **God will bring hard times in my life because he loves me.**
- **If we respected the wisdom of our earthly father's discipline, we should respect the wisdom of our heavenly father's discipline.**

Whoever refuses to spank his son hates him, but whoever loves his son disciplines him from early on. Proverbs 13:24 (GW)

Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. Revelation 3:19 (ESV)

2. God's discipline is always a blessing to do me good.

Behold, blessed is the one whom God reproves; therefore despise not the discipline of the Almighty. Job 5:17 (ESV)

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28 (ESV)

Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. Hebrews 5:8 (ESV)

3. God's discipline in my life is better than anyone else's discipline in my life.

But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world. 1 Corinthians 11:31–32 (ESV)

4. The result of God's discipline is a life of holiness, character and integrity.

When all kinds of trials and temptations crowd into your lives, my brothers, don't resent them as intruders, but welcome them as friends! Realize that they come to test your faith and to produce in you the quality of endurance. But let the process go on until that endurance is fully developed, and you will find you have become men of mature character, men of integrity with no weak spots. James 1:2-4 (J.B. Phillips)

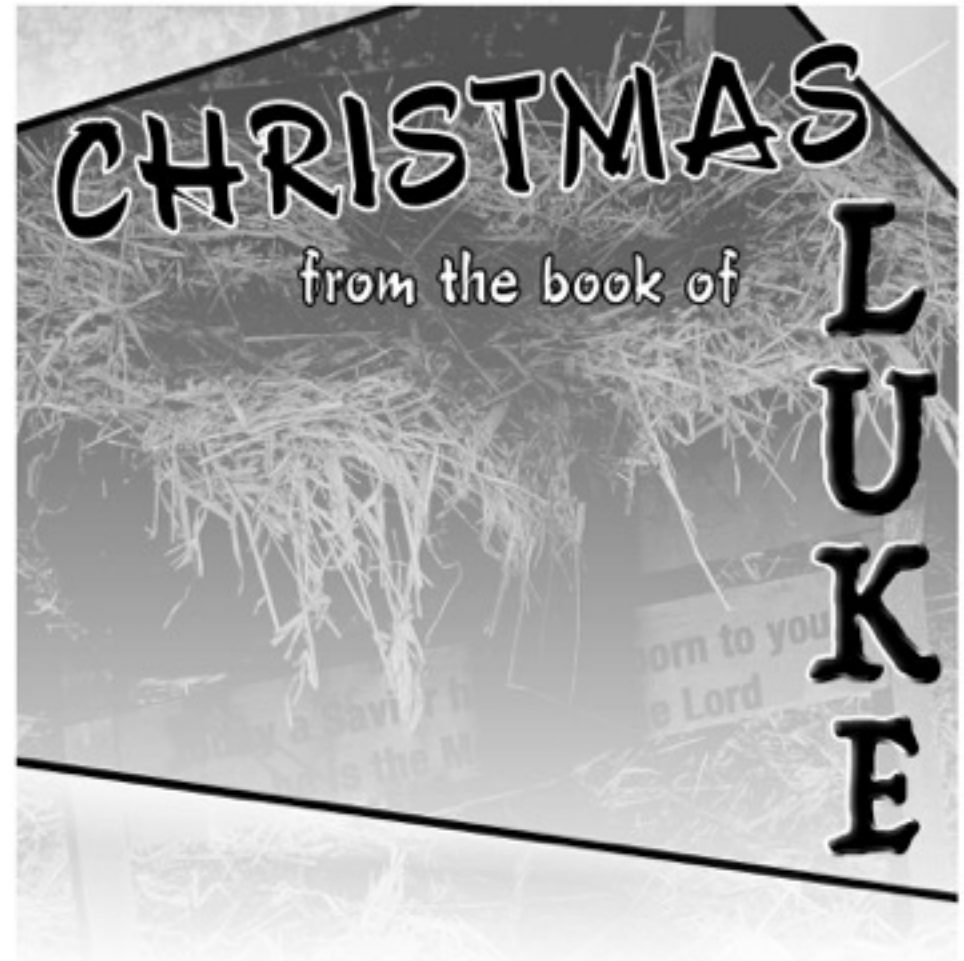
For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. Hebrews 12:5–11 (ESV)

5. The result of a disciplined life is a hunger to seek God and his Word.

Blessed is the man whom you discipline, O Lord, and whom you teach out of your law. Psalm 94:12 (ESV)

"Suffering unbolts the door of the heart that the Word hath easier entrance." — Richard Baxter

For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. 2 Corinthians 1:8–9 (ESV)



Zechariah - What Do I Need To Know About God's Discipline?



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