

All right, well, hey, everybody, welcome to Valley Creek. Hey, it is so good to be with you today. In fact, wherever you're at, why don't you join me as we welcome in all of our campuses together. My name is Dave, I actually get to serve here as our Next Gen pastor, and come on, isn't it great to see how God is moving in our young adults in the next gen of this church? See, I love that we are a next gen church. Okay, we've been in a series called 60 Days of Family, where we are learning all about what healthy family looks like. And, hey, I don't know about you, but this has felt a timely series, right? See, in a lot of ways, this is one of those series that we call a "by faith" series. And, the reason I say that is I don't think there's anyone here who would say that they're perfectly content with where their family is at. See, I think we know it, right. Family could be hard, but at the same time, I think in this series, we're beginning to see that family truly is a gift from God.

You see, I think we're learning that family was created by God, that it's important to God. And, we're starting to see that when we do family God's way, that there's life in it. So, if it's okay, what I'd like to do is I'd like to just kind of jump right in today, and I actually would like to start with a story. And, see, this is a story of what I would say is one of the more dysfunctional families in the Bible. And, you could say that's actually even saying something, because if you haven't noticed, there's a few dysfunctional families in the Bible. But, the story I'm talking about is the story of Eli and his two sons. See, Eli, he was a high priest. He was actually one of the last in the line of judges that led Israel back in the days of the Old Testament. And, if you know his story at all, you'll probably associate him with Samuel. See, he's the one who brought in Samuel when he was young. He raised him. In fact, he was the one that Samuel kept waking up in the middle of the night when Samuel was learning to hear God's voice. But see, I think what we tend to forget is that Eli had two other sons of his own, Hophni and Phinehas.

And besides maybe being two of the better names in the Bible, see, what we learn about Hophni and Phinehas is that they were supposed to be the ones that would actually carry on Eli's priestly line. The only problem with that, though, the Bible teaches us that they were both wicked men. See, the Bible teaches us that they would actually take advantage of their priestly position, and they would do things like commit adultery and rob from people. And, here's the thing. It tells us that Eli, their father, he knew it. See, at one point, Eli even rebuked him for it, but it says that he never went so far to take any kind of action to stop them. And, because of that, it was actually prophesied that not only would Eli lose both of his sons, but that his entire family would be cut off from the priesthood forever. And, just to kind of summarize the rest of the story, we learned that sure enough, one day that prophecy comes true. We learned that Israel is defeated in battle, as part of that battle, both Hophni and Phinehas are killed. And, it says that when Eli heard the news that he actually fell out of his chair, he broke his neck and he died. Okay.

So, first thought; first thought is this, basically, don't lean back in your chair. And, second, if that's not a dysfunctional family, see, I don't know what is. And, you might ask, why are we starting with that story? Well, let me tell you, see, as crazy or maybe as outlandish as that story

can sound, I actually think it's a story that we probably have more in common with today than what we realize. See, think about it. Doesn't it kind of sound like a lot of families we know today? Families that refuse to discipline, families that just kind of acquiesce and let their kids do whatever they want. See, maybe it's just me, but I kind of feel sometimes that families are just kind of running amok. In fact, just the other day, my family, we decided to go to our neighborhood pool. And, I don't know, maybe that was the first mistake, but we're at our neighborhood pool. And, we see these two kids, they're probably 6 or 7 years old, and they look like they're having what I would say is a metal pipe fight. And, you're like, okay, what's a metal pipe fight? Well think West Side Story, think opposing gangs, about ready to go at it.

They're basically taking turns trying to hit each other with a metal pipe. And, we're watching this, what is happening here? And, of course you don't see any parents around. So, eventually my wife, she decides that she's going to go over and encourage them to stop. So, this is great. She walks up, and she's like, "Okay guys, I'm not sure what we're doing, but it doesn't look safe. So, how about this? How about you just put down the pipe, let's come back over to the pool, let's go swim and have fun with everybody else." And, no joke, these two boys, they look back at her and they're like, "No, you can't make us." And, they just run off and they keep doing their things. Seriously, what do you do with that, right? And, I know that's easy to just blow that off and say, "Oh, that's kids being kids." But here's the thing, what happens when those kids grow up and nobody's ever taught them to be respectful or to honor authority that's actually in their life? See, I get it. Sometimes it is just a lack of maturity, but sometimes it's more than that.

And, when we're not taking time in our families to correct things, like a lack of respect or just blatant disobedience, see, those things can actually end up becoming major character flaws in people's lives. And, to not to take the time to address that, here's the thing, that's not just a lack of discipline, that's actually a lack of love. It's a lack of love. And, see really the point I'm trying to make is that discipline is part of what a healthy family looks like. And, if we want to have a healthy family, we have to be willing to discipline. So, can I ask you today, is the tool of discipline something that's routinely used in your home? Is it even part of what you would say is essential for healthy family? Because, here's why. See, "The Lord disciplines those He loves." And, catch what this is saying. Basically, this is saying that discipline is an expression of love. To love is to discipline, to discipline is to love. Catch that.

Love is discipline. Discipline is love. See, when it comes to families, I think there's actually very few topics that are more likely to get a reaction than the topic of discipline. In fact, the moment I said the word I'm sure I lost a lot of you that are here today because see our view of discipline is broken. I don't think we often see it as love. See, the reality is, it's probably one of those things that we really just don't know what to do with and that's for good reason. Discipline is hard, right. It's tough. It takes time. It takes energy. It's an effort. I think a lot of times when we're having to discipline we can sense that the stakes, they're high. There's certainly no shortage of opinion on how to do it, right? In fact, if I asked 100 people here their thoughts on

discipline, I'm sure I'd get 100 different responses. The truth is though we've been conditioned to see it as a negative and I think that's because rarely is it done well. See, but here's the thing. I think because we've had these negative experiences with being disciplined, rarely is it actually used in family today and here's the thing.

Not using the tool of discipline, man it's about the same as straight up misusing it. See, both abuse and neglect are both harmful and that's because Scripture tells us that, "The heart is deceitful above all things." See, basically, what that means is if we're left to ourselves then we're going to make poor decisions in life, right. We're going to be more likely to do harmful and dangerous things. Kind of like trying to hit each other with a metal pipe. We're going to be more prone to things like entitlement. We're not going to develop the internal disciplines that are just necessary for life and I think because of that we start to see that, our relationships suffer and we're more likely to live a life that's full of regret. So, how about this? How about today instead of just allowing the world or maybe even our past experiences to shape our views on discipline, how about today, we just truly look to seek first His kingdom and allow the Word of God to define what discipline should look in our life.

In fact, even right now. I just say, Holy Spirit, we just choose to surrender this time to You today. And I pray God that it wouldn't be my words today, but it's ultimately Your heart that's shared and revealed. And I pray God that You would give us a willingness, maybe even more than that, give us a hunger to align our lives and our family to the truth of Your ways. See, fortunately for us, God actually has a lot to say about the topic of discipline. So, if I can, let me give us just three thoughts today on what that looks like. See, the first thought is this. See, discipline comes from God. See, Scripture shows us that discipline, it comes straight from the heart of God and because of that, it's God that gets to be the one to set the standard for what it looks in our life. In fact, look back with me at Hebrews 12. It says, "Do not make light of the Lord's discipline and do not lose heart when He rebukes you because the Lord disciplines those He loves..."

It goes on to say, "For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you're not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons." See, that's one of those passages in our Bible that we probably don't read a lot, but that's a great passage. just look at what it's saying. It's saying first that God Himself disciplines and see when you look at how God disciplines you see that He's not doing it to break us or destroy us. It's not about venting His anger. It actually says He disciplines because He loves. See, we have to remember that 1 John teaches us that actually God is love, right. It's not just something He does. It's actually who He is. It's His very essence and nature. And really what that means is that even when He's disciplining it still comes from the heart of love. And do you remember that really famous passage in 1 Corinthians? See, this is the passage that tells us what love is really like.

Well, again, if discipline is an expression of love, then really what this is it's a declaration of what discipline should look like. So, think about it. That means that discipline is patient and kind. It means that discipline is not proud. It's not self-seeking. It's not easily angered. Discipline doesn't keep record of wrong, right. Instead, discipline aligns and it rejoices with truth. It protects. It trusts. It hopes. It always perseveres. So, let me ask you, is this what discipline looks like in your home? And, if not, remember we're just now learning what it looks like to live as healthy family, so that's okay. And also let me ask, if you don't have kids in your home, right now, is this what you experienced growing up? Because, again, this is what we're learning what it should look like. And even if you don't have kids in your home right now, it doesn't mean that you won't someday, right? It doesn't mean that you don't have grandchildren. It doesn't mean that there's not someone in your life that you can encourage towards this. The point is, discipline is for all of us. This message is for all of us.

And, again, because God is the one who establishes discipline, He gets to establish what it looks like in our life even when it feels upside down maybe to the way that we think or what we've experienced in the past. And, see, I think a lot of times we tend to see discipline as a sign of rejection, right. But, really it's meant to be a sign of acceptance. In fact, look back with me at Hebrews 12. See, it says, "If you're not disciplined then you're illegitimate children and not true sons." So, in other words, the fact that God is willing to take the time to discipline us it's actually proof that He's treating us sons, His beloved children. So, it's not a sign of rejection, it's actually proof that we belong. And I think another way to look at that is if God were to not discipline us well then that would be for Him to treat us an orphan. And, see remember an orphan is someone who has no home. They don't have a family to belong to.

So, basically, if you extrapolate that thought, what it's saying is that discipline is one of the primary things that actually validates and declares to the world that you are a family. And, not just a random group of people that lives together. See, it's actually one of the defining marks of family. It's one of the ways that healthy families function. And, what we have to remember in this is, see, God, He paid a great price to ultimately bring us into His family. It's when we were at our worst that ultimately He gave us His best in Jesus. And, see, when someone is willing to invest in you, then you have to trust that they're going to be willing to take the time and they're going to be willing to do whatever it takes. And, that includes disciplining. It includes correcting to help you be the best that you can be. See, that's not because they don't like you or because they've rejected you. It's actually because they have so much for you. See, another way to think about that is, see, God doesn't require perfection for us to ultimately come to Him. But, God loves us too much to leave us where we are. And, that brings us to our second thought. See, discipline is designed to transform us.

See, look what it goes on to say in Hebrews. It says, "God disciplines us for our good that we may share in His holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who've been trained by it." See, it tells us that God disciplines us for our good. Again, it has nothing to do with Him,

but everything to do with us. And, it says that as we're trained by it that we will begin to share in His holiness and experience a harvest of righteousness and peace in our lives. See, what that ultimately means is, as we're disciplined that we will begin to reflect the character of God in all that we do, right. It literally means that it transforms us. And, I don't know about you, but I want that for me. And, more importantly, I want that for my family. See, discipline it's essential and let me just ask this question.

Do you ever really stop to think, why do we discipline in the first place? What are we trying to accomplish in it? Do we even have a goal in mind? And, I ask because I'm convinced that I think a lot of times none of us really stop to even think about it. Instead, I think we just kind of react, right. We tend to do or say what our parents did or said to us or maybe the pendulum that swung way over here and we intentionally don't discipline the way that our parents did us. Either way, that's not a goal. See, the goal is not to respond to what our parents did or didn't do. It's actually to follow God's example and how He disciplines. And, I think we see here in this example that God he's intentional when He disciplines us, right. He's intentional and He always has the heart and mind. See, discipline is not just about correcting our behavior. What discipline is really intended to do it's about exposing and addressing and ultimately perfecting the heart issues that cause the behavior in the first place.

And, see we learn from Scripture that, "Folly is actually bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far away." See, what that actually means is that folly or foolishness it's just something that's naturally within us, right. So, it takes discipline, it takes love to drive it away. And, it takes discipline to help us grow and mature into the fullness of who God has created us to be. So, really what this is talking about is discipleship. See, in a lot of ways discipline and discipleship they're kind of the same thing, right. It's hard to have one without the other. Even the two words discipline and discipleship, if you think about it, they come from the same word construct. They actually both derive from a Latin term that means student, learner or follower. And, what that suggests is that when you're disciplined that there is a shaping and a molding and a forming that takes place. So, it's meant to be this external process that leads to an internal change.

But, I think, see, the problem is what we often think about when we use the word discipline really deserves another name – punishment. You see, but punishment is not discipline, punishment is punishment. In fact, let me say it again. Punishment is not discipline, punishment is punishment. Really, the two couldn't be more different. See, check this out. See, Scripture teaches us that, "There is no fear in love," right. And, remember love is discipline, discipline is love so there's no fear in discipline. In fact, it says that "Perfect love," or perfect discipline, "it drives out fear," catch this, "because fear has to do with punishment." The two couldn't be more different. Discipline is not punishment, punishment is punishment. See, where discipline is rooted in love and it's focused on transformation, punishment is actually rooted in anger and it rarely makes a person better, right. Punishment doesn't have any interest in resolving those deeper heart issues that we just talked about.

In fact, the very nature of punishment, it implies retribution and payback. It's about seeking to even the score with whoever we think has wronged us. And, that's why the message of punishment, it's, "If you don't obey me well then I'm going to make you pay for it. If you embarrass me or inconvenience me, then I'm going to embarrass and inconvenience you back." And, see the only thing that, that really changes is the relationship and it's not for the better. See, the point is punishment, it actually has no place in the Bible, and therefore, it should have no place in our homes. Think about this. See, punishment it's actually the antithesis of the gospel. The whole idea of retribution and payback you realize, it goes completely against the gospel of grace, right. In fact, the idea of punishment in the Bible, it has to do with God's wrath, but we have to remember that God's wrath it's been satisfied in full in Jesus.

See, Jesus went to the Cross, He was punished there for us so that you and I will never have to be. And think about it, we love the gospel of grace for ourselves, right. None of us want punishment or justice in the sense of getting what we deserve, but as much as we love mercy when it's applied to us I think sometimes we struggle in applying it to others. And, think about this, if you are a mom or a dad, right, so all the parents in the room you've got to catch this. You are the literal embodiment of theology to your kids. Okay, what does that mean? It means theology, or what we believe about God, it's ultimately more caught than it is taught. And, if we feel the need to punish within our homes, then we have to seriously stop and ask ourselves, "Okay, what does that really reveal about my faith in the finished work of Jesus?" I don't want to punish my kids, right? I don't want to teach them that they have to pay me back for the wrongs that they committed; instead, I want to use discipline and correction and I want to do it in an appropriate way that allows them to experience the love of God, right? That allows them to grow and to mature into the fullness of who God has created them to be.

So, parents don't punish your kids, discipline them, right. Disciple them, love them the way that God loved them. Let me give you kind of a simple way to kind of think about the two. See, the goal of discipline, as we said, it's about transformation, right. We're trying to train and grow our children or family into a sense of maturity. Whereas, punishment, again, it's about payback and retribution. The focus of discipline, it's all about the future. It's about who that person is becoming and helping them get there. Whereas, punishment, it just looks at what happened in the past and we're going to make sure that we make them pay for that. See, the motive of discipline, again, it's love, it's concern for others. Whereas, punishment, on the other hand, it's about me, right. It's my anger. It's my frustration. It's my embarrassment. And, parents, let me just say, if you find yourself starting in that place well then you're already going the wrong way. And, in terms of outcome, discipline, it leads to security and trust. Punishment, it causes fear. It actually causes our family to pull back, to hide, to keep things in the dark.

And because all offense is ultimately offense towards someone, discipline it actually helps to restore the relationship where punishment only further damages it. So, let me ask, when you

look at this chart, what outcomes are you seeing in your home? Are they the outcomes that you want, right? And, for parents maybe another question to ask yourself is, what's your parenting style? So, you realize we all have a parenting style and our parenting style, it actually influences how we approach discipline in our home. In fact, research would tell us that there's really only two kind of styles, right. We all tend to lean one way or the other. We tend to either be overly controlling or overly permissive. Overly controlling and overly permissive, and if you're not sure which way you lean, let me just say, great place to start just ask your kids, right. And, don't just think about it when you're at your best. Think about it when you're tired.

Think about it when you come home from what has been a really hard day at work. Think about when you're trying to parent that same thing for what feels the millionth time because I think we know this, right. Rarely does the need to discipline actually happen in convenient times, right. If you don't want to take my word for it, ask any parent who's ever taken their toddler to a grocery store. Just saying. Point is, regardless of whatever way you lean, there's actually a cost when we end up parenting in the extremes. And, see, if your tendency is to be over controlling, I think a lot of times that's the result of not being disciplined when we were young, right. And, because of that we're trying to prevent our kids from repeating some of the same mistakes that we made. I get that. I think that's noble. And, I would even say it's healthy and good to have rules and boundaries in place. But, here's the thing, to have too many of them, right, to try and shelter our kids, to try and prevent them from ever making a mistake. What it does, is it actually robs them from opportunities to grow. See, I think we want our homes to be places where our kids will run to us, not away from us, right.

We want the opportunity to partner with them, to walk with them, to help them learn, to interpret and navigate this world that they live in. But, when we're overbearing or when we react and we lash out in anger or frustration to their mistakes, what happens is we end up actually driving them away. It's why, Scripture, it tells us not to exacerbate our kids, but instead bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. And, here's the thing; again, if discipline is love, love doesn't control. But, I think, right now, honestly, even more so than being overly controlling, I think the tendency these days it seems to be more overly permissive, right. And, I'm not sure; maybe, we're too tired, we're too busy. Maybe, we think if we discipline at all, it's going to actually affect the relationship, that our kids are going to shut down, that it'll drive them away. But, let me remind you guys, really one of the most powerful ways that we could love our family is to be consistent in how we discipline. So, you've got to remember that love it's selfless in nature. That means that it's always going to, basically, meet the highest need of the one that it's being expressed to, right.

That means, basically, we don't get to pick and choose how and when we discipline, and catch this. See, research has even shown that kids who lack discipline, they actually suffer the most with things anxiety and low self-esteem. That's fascinating, right. Well, partly that's because of the lack of limits and the lack of clear boundaries in their life, but really it's even more than that. See, because they lack discipline, they actually lack the sense that they're loved. And, I think

when you take that to heart you understand why the Book of Proverbs, it takes really such a strong stance on the need for discipline in home. So, let me just read these to you and just listen to the words that are being used here. See, it says, "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him." "Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to their death." Those are really strong words, right.

But, they're in the Bible so as parents we have to decide what we're going to do with that. And, think back with me to the Eli story. You know what's really ironic about that story? See, what's ironic about that story is Eli wasn't actually responsible for his son's actions. The truth is, he wasn't even responsible for their heart towards God; but because he was their father he was responsible to discipline them, right. He was responsible to love them the way that God loved them. And when he didn't do that, not only did it cost everyone he ultimately became party to their death, right. And you might say that, "Man that's harsh come on." I know, but you've got to catch. There's a gravity and a burden to being a parent, right. Kids, they will make mistakes and they're going to do things that they're not supposed to do. That's actually called part of being a kid. It's part of growing up, but when we ignore it or we choose not to help them grow and learn from it, then, ultimately, that's on us. And, hear me, I get it. If you're sitting there and you're just thinking like, "Man, but yeah I can't do that."

I know but the truth is you don't really get to say that because you've got to understand, God handpicked you to be their parent, right. God handpicked you – it means that your kids weren't brought to you by accident. And, because God handpicked you, it means that you're the only one in this world with the primary responsibility to give your kids what they need, right. So, you have to understand, it's really hard for teachers to teach and coaches to coach. In fact, it's even hard for the church to help in making disciples of kids that are never disciplined at home. See, love doesn't control, but nor is it permissive. And, again, just let me remind you, God chose you. He picked you, right. That means he believes in you. It means that He's placed His spirit within you and He is going to give you everything that you need to parent them and to discipline them in love. Okay, so that was kind of the hard part. So, we've got that. We're going to kind of keep moving on. Let me see if I can't just pull this together real quick. See, so far we've said that discipline comes from God, that discipline is designed to transform us. Our final thought is this.

See, discipline involves both words and actions. See, our passage in Hebrews, it uses two words – the words "discipline" and "rebuke." And really, when you look back at it in the Old Testament we learned that the word discipline, it comes from a word that basically implies God's actions. Think specifically actions that bind, restrain, that kind of moderate what somebody can or can't do. In other words, think consequences. And in the word rebuke, it actually refers to God's words, specifically words of warning or correction. So, God uses both words and actions, right, consequences and correction. And in the case of God, really His words are His actions, right. They're one and the same. It's why in Genesis 1 when God said, "Let there be light," there was light. He didn't have to say it and then proceed to do it. The



words themselves, they brought forth the action that He desired; but in our case, we really do need both. See, again, think of Eli. It wasn't that he didn't rebuke his kids, he did.

The challenge was his words; they actually lacked action to back them up and because of that they ultimately became meaningless. And, I think, we see this all the time, right. We see parents that are like, "Don't do that," to their kids, but then they don't actually do anything to stop the kid from doing the very thing they just told them not to do. Okay, so that's all words, no actions. And then on the flip side, see, if all we're after is actually stopping the behavior, then maybe actions alone are great. But, again, the aim of discipline, it's higher than that. The aim of discipline, it's about turning hearts. Remember, it's about renewing minds. So, our actions actually need the support of words to help our families learn to think like God, and ultimately turn from the ways of this world. And, see, if you haven't noticed, the ways of this world, they have a strong pull on our family right now. I think we see time and time again our kids getting tangled up in it. And, that's why Scripture, it tells us, "See to it that no one takes you captive," right. See to it that no one takes your kids captive, your family captive, "through hollow and deceptive philosophies, which depend on human tradition and the basic principles of this world."

See, that's what's happening to our families right now. They're getting caught up in the philosophies, the traditions, the principles of this world. And, if you've ever tried to get somebody untangled from something, think like untangled from a thorn bush. I think you know. It's a painful, it's a tedious process. It, basically, just means that our actions and they need words that will untangle the ungodly beliefs in the worldly thinking that exists within them. Okay, so let's get practical for a second. So, let's talk about what this actually looks like. How do we use discipline as a tool and use words and actions that actually leads to both love and transformation. And, if I can, I want to go through these next things real quick. They're just a couple tips that I think will help us understand what this looks like. The first tip is, you've just got to check your heart, right. Again, we said that we should never discipline out of anger or emotion. Discipline it's meant to be an occasion, not an outburst, right.

It's a process, not an event. So, it takes time, it takes patience to get your heart right. And, the way that you do that is prayer. Man, when you have to discipline, you should be praying more than you ever do, right. Because you need to pray to calm yourself down when your kids are acting crazy. You should be praying to ask God and seek God for His wisdom and discernment to be able to discipline the way that He does. Because we want to make sure that we're able to discipline them for their sake and not ours. And, that only is possible when we've taken the time to check our heart and make sure that it's right. And, then next, we have to own our part. See, let's be honest; sometimes our expectations, they're just not as clear as what we hoped that they would be. Okay, that's great, just own it. And maybe you have kids that are older, maybe you've allowed them to kind of get away with a lot over the past several years. You didn't discipline them or parent them as intentionally as you want. Again, that's okay, just own

it. See, I think sometimes one of the best things we could say to our kids is just simply, "I'm sorry." See, God doesn't expect us to be perfect parents, and neither do our kids.

And, seriously, if you're sitting there and you're like, "Yep, that's pretty much it. I have been letting my kids just do and get away with whatever they want. And now, we're feeling the pain of it." Okay, again, that's okay, just own it. Apologize for it. Just choose to start today, and I think you will be amazed at what God will do with that. And, once you've checked your heart and you've owned your part, well then the next thing is, is just to choose appropriate consequences. See, this is that point where we get to say, you can't ground them for life for forgetting to take out the trash, but you also can't tell them it's no big deal when they're completely repeatedly looking at things on their phone that they shouldn't be. And whether it's a loss of privileges or it's added responsibilities, I think the thing is when you choose consequences just make sure that you keep the specific child in mind. See, in my family, our oldest son when he was younger, the worst thing that we could do was actually send him to his room. He hated missing out on things. Our daughter, on the other hand, she would hang in her room all day, literally.

We would send her to her room, she'd be like, "Thanks for the spa day dad." So, we had to find other ways to discipline her. The thing is, whatever we choose, we just have to follow through on it otherwise it's confusing, and again, our words will be meaningless. There's also sometimes what we call natural consequences, right. See, natural consequences that is like your parenting best friend. And, what I mean is, if the natural consequence of whatever they did is enough to teach them a lesson, then that's great. You actually don't have to do anything more. Instead, you just get to come alongside them and you get to help them walk through it. And, once we've chosen consequences, then we just get to teach them to take responsibility. See, if our kids have done something that caused offense towards someone, then we want to help them learn to apologize and make that right. And, remember, true repentance, like, it doesn't accuse people. True repentance is actually willing to take ownership for the mistake even when you're not at fault. And then, finally, scripture says when someone's caught in sin that we're to restore them gently.

Basically, that just means we have to build back up whatever we broke down. And, see, the way that we do that is by immediately bringing restitution and love, reinsurance and encouragement. Our families just sometimes need to hear that we believe in them and we're behind them even when they're in the middle of their mess. And, let me just say, if you're the one that brought the discipline, you also should be the one to bring the encouragement, right. Don't play like the good cop, bad cop game. Remember, the God who disciplines He's also the father in Luke 15 that actually runs out to his prodigal son to embrace him with a hug and a kiss. See, what encouragement does is it brings hope, right. And it'll basically war against the enemy who wants to convince our kids that they're never going to be able to get this right. That they're never going to be lovable. So, that's how we do it, right. That's how we, basically,

use discipline as a tool to bring both love and transformation. But, then the secondary question is, "Okay, if that's how we do it, well then how do we actually receive it, right?"

How do we respond when we're the ones that are actually being disciplined? Well, remember that this whole series, we've been saying it's, "As for me, and then my family," right. So, there's an invitation of this for all of us, and really how do we do it? It's the same thing, right. You check your heart, you own your part, instead of choosing consequences you accept them, you take responsibility, and then you just willingly walk out this journey of restoration. See, if we want to do family right, we have to be both willing to discipline but also be willing to receive discipline, right. We don't want to make light of it, we don't want to lose heart in it. Instead, we want to receive it as love and see that it's our family loving us the way that God loves us in return. And really, what I hope that we all catch in this, see, I hope we catch that God has given us principles for healthy family, and it's totally possible to do it His way.

See, God disciplines those He loves. And because He's inviting us to live as healthy family, He's inviting us to do the same. Let's go ahead and close your eyes. Let's pray together. So, what does God want to say to you about this topic? It's a big topic. It's a heavy principle. We acknowledge that. But, it's also God's goodness for our life. So, again, what does God want to say? And if you're sitting there today and maybe a lot of this, it's hard to hear because of your past experiences. I think if that's you, I think just today the Holy Spirit just wants to heal your heart and comfort you. And if you're sitting there maybe you're still like, "Man, I have no idea where to start in all of this?"

Okay, my encouragement then would invite the Holy Spirit to be your counselor and your guide and allow Him to show you how. See, wherever we're at, I just ask God that you would help us have the faith to do family your way. God, would You give us strength, and again, the faith to grab hold of these principles that You are giving us. God, help us to see discipline through the lens of your kingdom. God, we are grateful what You're doing in this series. We are grateful for the way that You are moving in the hearts of our families. So, I just ask God, let this be the healthiest season of family that we've ever experienced. In Jesus' name, amen.