

Articles and Sermons :: CHASTENING AND HOLINESS by Andrew Murray

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It is for chastening that ye endure; God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father chasteneth not ? 8. But if ye are without chastening, whereof all

have been made partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. 9. Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much

rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10. For they verily for a few days chastened us as seemed good to them; but he for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness. Hebrews 12:7-10

WE live in a world full of suffering. A great part of the daily life of many is made up of little trials and vexations. A sharp word; an unkind

judgment; neglect or ingratitude from someone from whom we did not expect it; the carelessness of a servant; the temper of a husband or wife;

the loss accruing through the neglect or unfaithfulness of others; the disappointment of our wishes; the accidents that vex us all these things in

daily life often come to us with far greater temptation and danger than times of persecution for the faith brought to the martyrs. By their littleness

and their frequency and their suddenness, they surprise and conquer us ere we know. If Christianity is to be a success, if Christ is to save

completely, there must be a provision, sufficient and efficacious, to prevent suffering from causing discouragement or defeat, to transform it into

blessing and help.

If it can enable us to rejoice in tribulation, to glory in infirmities, and to pass unharmed through trial, it will indeed be the religion man needs in a

world of suffering. He that has this secret, whereby what have been hindrances become helps, and his very enemies are made to serve him, is on

the way to be the Christian, God would have him be. God has made such a provision. First of all, He gives His own Son, as the chief of sufferers,

to show us how close the relation is between suffering and His love, suffering and the victory over sin, suffering and perfection of character,

suffering and glory. Yea more, to provide us with One, who can sympathise, who can teach us how to suffer, and who, as the Conqueror of sin

through suffering, can breathe His own life and strength into us. And thus He comes as our Father, to shed His heavenly light on our afflictions,

and to teach us the lessons our portion contains. They are these. Chastening is a part of a father's training, and one of the marks of son-ship.

Submission to chastening forms and proves the truly childlike character. God's chastening makes us partakers of God's holiness. See how these

three thoughts are brought out here. Chastening is a needful part of a father's training. It is for chastening that ye endure; all suffering is a divine

chastening.

God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father chasteneth not? Our own childhood and fatherhood teach it to us;

discipline, chastening, and reproof, in whatever form, is an indispensable part of education; where a child needs it a father may not withhold it. In

the will of God, and in the very nature of things, sin and suffering go together, and even love can cause suffering for the greater good of casting

out the sin. Let the child of God learn the lesson suffering is chastening, the chastening of love. We ought to spare no pains to learn this lesson

well; we ought to repeat and repeat it, until we can say Now, I know it perfectly: every trial, small or great, I will look upon at once as a

messenger of God's love. If you thus meet it, whether it comes through men or yourself or more directly from above, as God's appointment, you

are in the right attitude for bearing and being blessed by it. Submission to chastening forms and proves the truly childlike spirit. Furthermore, we

had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and

live? When the Lamb of God came to this earth to suffer God's will, it was that He might teach us what the place is that becomes the creature, and

the child absolute subjection to the perfect will of love. He came to show that the thing that makes life worth having is to have it to give up to

God, and to prove that humility and resignation are the sacrifices God delights in, and the sure, the only path to God. No religion or worship of

God can be acceptable to Him but as He sees in it conformity to the life and spirit of His Son. We can only please Him as we are like-minded to

Christ. Learn, O child of God! the unspeakable privilege in suffering, of giving up thy will to God, even as Jesus did, of adoring His wisdom and

goodness, and entering deeper into the child's spirit and the child's place to reverence and submit. Chastening is one of the marks of sonship. If

ye are without chastening, then are ye bastards and not sons. Suffering is not in itself a sign of son-ship. An enemy or a criminal may be

scourged; even a slave chastened as well as a son. But to him who is a son, chastening reminds him of his place, and calls him to meet this

part of a son's heritage in the spirit and with the hope of a son with the assurance that it will draw him nearer and lock him closer to the Father.

Chastening makes us partakers of God's holiness. He chasteneth us for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. What a new light on

suffering and chastening! He that maketh holy and they that are made holy are all of one. We have entrance into the Holiest of All, where we will

have been made holy. He hath made the people holy by His blood. And now comes suffering shall we not welcome it when He sends it with such

a message to break open our inner being, and waken up our desire, and make us partakers in our inmost life of that holiness Jesus gives, of that

holiness into which we enter in God's presence. Yes, welcome suffering, if it leads us, through subjection to God's will and love, into His holiness as our portion.