

(2006 Conference) 7. a Right Attitude to Correction

by Zac Poonen

A right attitude to correction is essential for spiritual growth and becoming more like God.

Duration: 1:01:56

Scripture: Proverbs 3:11

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Godly Correction"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of receiving correction in a godly way, showcasing examples from the Bible where correction was necessary for growth and salvation. It highlights the need to humbly accept correction as a form of love and guidance, even when it may be strong or public. The speaker urges listeners to appreciate correction from God, family, and church leaders, recognizing it as a means to save souls and foster spiritual growth.

Transcript

We want to continue with our study in seeing areas where we may be imbalanced. We want to try, you know, in a short conference like this where we have only about 10 or 12 sessions, we can't look at everything, but we want to concentrate particularly on the areas where our churches and we may be imbalanced. We don't want to think much about the imbalance that there is in other churches, it's none of our business.

And if you, even in our Bible studies, we did not give equal importance to both sides because some things are already emphasized here and there's no need to emphasize that. It's the areas where we are weak or imbalanced that we need to stress more. For example, we spoke about the control of our tongue, very important because I feel that we haven't considered that seriously enough even though we've heard many messages on it.

We spoke about the need for expressing appreciation and expressing gratitude, encouraging people. We spoke about the need to learn to have a right attitude to money and material things and not be so possessive, but to be rich towards God. And today I want to speak on receiving correction in a godly way.

There is no human being that does not need to receive correction. And the Bible says that we saw that at the beginning, 2 Timothy 3, 16, 17, God has given us his word to correct us. We heard this morning about

when we are tending to go astray, the Holy Spirit saying, no, not that way, this way.

And we also read in the Bible about God disciplining us when we don't listen to correction. So there's correction and there's discipline. When the Holy Spirit says, don't go that way and you still go that way, then he may need to discipline you to bring you back to the right path.

So we'll begin with a verse in Revelation 3. Now you know that the church in Laodicea was perhaps the most worldly, proud, wealthy church of all the seven churches in Revelation. In fact, the Lord had nothing good to say about them. Even in Sardis, he said, but there are still a few among you who will walk with me in white.

There was at least one good thing in Revelation 3, 4. But when it came to the church in Laodicea, there was not even one good thing that he could say. It was the worst church. And all he had to say was, you're neither cold nor hot, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

And then he says amazing words to the worst church. Verse 19, it's those whom I love that I rebuke and I discipline. Imagine Jesus loved even that worst church, the worst elder, and the worst believer sitting here.

He loves you. And one proof of his love is he will reprove you. He will correct you.

He will rebuke you. And he will discipline you so that you can be zealous and repent, not half-heartedly and say, yeah, I think I was a bit wrong there. That's not zealous repentance.

That's not the way to receive correction. Yeah, now that you say it, I think you're probably right. There's no hope for such people.

It's those who are zealous. Oh, I really see I was totally wrong there. I was totally wrong.

Boy, there's tremendous hope for such people. But I tell you, I have rarely ever seen such repentance. Most of the people that I've corrected after a long discussion, they will say, yeah, I think you're right, Brother Zach.

I'm just so disappointed because I don't think there's much hope for that person because he's just going to do 10,000 more blunders in his life. God was trying to save him from all that, but the guy is too proud to acknowledge. Be zealous and repent when the Lord corrects you and disciplines you either directly or through his servants.

It's a mark of his love. When I was a young Christian, if you had asked me, how do you know that Jesus loves you? I'd have had only one answer. He left heaven and came and died for me.

Today, if you were to ask me, how do you know that Jesus loves you? I'll say, well, he died for me on the cross, but in addition, he rebukes me. He disciplines me. Do you think he doesn't do that? You may not know about it, but he does.

And that is the proof that I'm not an illegitimate child. I am a son of my father. That's the proof.

See what it says in Hebrews in chapter 12, Hebrews chapter 12. It speaks about looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith and running the race, looking at him and consider him who endured so much opposition from sinners. And then it says, you're not resisted to the point of shedding blood in verse four, like he did.

And then my son, the middle of verse five, don't regard lightly the discipline of the Lord. When the Lord disciplines you, don't shrug it off and say, oh, well, okay. Don't faint when you're reprov'd by him.

Don't get all discouraged because you were corrected. Don't faint and give up. Oh, well, what's the use following the Lord? No, because it is those whom the Lord loves, whom he disciplines.

It's the child whom he embraces that he corrects. He scourges every child whom he receives. God gave me four sons and I wanted to be a father to them just like God was a father to me.

That was my ideal. God was a fantastically loving father to me, sacrificial, self-denying, always wanting my good. And I have tried to be like that to my boys, but he also disciplined me, rebuked me sometimes very severely.

And I did that to my boys. And that has not driven me away from God. It has made me cling to him.

I love him even more because he disciplines me. There are times when I've had a little fever or something and I'm lying in my bed and I know it's a discipline. I always ask myself, even if I have a little toss from the scooter, like I used to have, and I said, Lord, why did that happen? And the Lord has said that is to save you from a greater accident.

Don't drive so fast. So there is a warning there. Thank you, Lord.

Thank you for these little warnings that saved me from bigger collisions. And I really have to thank God. 45 years I've ridden a scooter and never had a head-on collision with anywhere because of these little warnings God has given me.

God gives you little warnings to save you from head-on collisions later on in life. Don't get offended when you get them. If you accept them, it will save you from head-on collisions later on spiritually.

And so he scourges every son whom he receives. And I said, well, if God is like that to me. And you know, I've times when I've been sick sometimes and I said, Lord, what was that for? And the Lord has pointed out to me something that happened in the previous, usually the previous one week, somewhere I slipped up and maybe a rude word somewhere.

It could be a very small thing in the eyes of other believers. Oh, that's a small thing. And it is a small thing, but the Lord is so interested in making me perfect that he doesn't even want that small thing.

He's not happy that I got 99 and a half percent. Everybody else would be happy, but God says, no, my son, you can do better. And I'm so thrilled that my heavenly father is not happy that I got 99 and a half percent.

He wants me to get a hundred. That I have wept tears of joy. And I've said to him, I say, Lord, please treat me like this till the end of my life.

Please treat me like this till the end of my life, that if I slip up even slightly, I lose half a mark somewhere, pull me up, put me in bed, do something so that I'm protected. Because I know this is the mark of your love. I promise you, Lord, I'll not get offended.

I promise you I'll not get discouraged. I promise you I'll submit to your correction. And I tell you, it's made me a much better man.

It will make you too. God will do it. But if he sees that you get offended by his correction, he leave you alone.

You know, if you read the Psalms, you sometimes come across the word Sela. S-E-L-A-H. You know what that means? Stop for a few moments and think about that.

So we just had a Sela. Think about it, that your heavenly father disciplines you for your good. Sela.

That's great. The Psalmist said, don't rush, don't rush to the next verse. Just hang on.

Think about that before you go to the next verse. Okay, so I have been so delighted by the Lord's jealous care over me. That I tell you, it's to me, it is one of the most precious things in my relationship with God.

That little things he pulls me up on such trivial things. I mean, which you would think, oh, that's nothing. I know it's nothing, but it was 0.1% less than perfection.

And the Lord says, no, I want you to be perfect, my son. Don't worry if other people are not interested in it. I know you are.

I want you to be perfect. Now I was telling you about this brother who used to be in our church. He's no two of them.

One of them came to me once and said, Brother Zach, give me a spiritual checkup. I said, really? Can you bear it? He said, yeah. So I told him.

Within a few weeks, he left the church. I think of another brother who we were trying to groom up for some type of leadership. But he was doing some stupid things in his little group that was coming up in that town.

And I called him once and I talked to him straight. I said, this is not the way to do things. And he turned around to me and said, Brother Zach, I'm not used to people speaking to me like that.

Oh, I said, really? I'm sorry. I'll never speak like that to you again. And I never did.

I said, you can go your way. The guy has drifted. I saw him some time ago.

All grace departed from his life, face fallen, dark, sad. I kept my word that I would never speak to him again because he didn't want to be spoken to like that. Now, I spoke to him like that because he had chosen to submit to my authority.

I don't go around telling people who are not chosen that. But he thought I just got to praise him all the time. He needed correction.

I think of other brothers, good examples, whom also I have corrected. There are different brothers. Sometimes I've said, please sit at home for two months and don't come to the church.

You don't appreciate the church enough. Don't come to any meetings. And they've come back two months later, completely transformed and gone on with God.

So there are two ways in which you can accept correction. And many of you have been corrected how you took it. I don't know.

It's not a question of how you took it on the surface. You can take it one way on the surface because you know, I must, you know, act spiritual and say thank you very much and all that. But it's a question of what you think about it later on.

Do you really, are you really grateful? Do you see it as a gift of a hundred thousand rupees that somebody gave you? Do you see it like that? How would you look at a person who gave you a gift of a hundred thousand rupees? How would you look at him the next day? Do you look at the person who corrected you like that? Or do you go with a long face? That shows that our attitude to correction is not what it should be. And who's the loser? We. If you think that you're perfect and you don't need any correction, something is seriously wrong.

We all need it. We need to hear what God is trying to say to us through his word, through his servants. So it says here, the Lord scourges every son whom he receives.

And then it goes on to say in verse 7, if God disciplines you, he's dealing with you like sons. Because which son is there whom his father does not discipline? What a word. Which child is there whom his father does not discipline? Unfortunately, there are some fathers today who do not discipline their children.

But the Holy Spirit says, which father is there who doesn't discipline his children? Are there such stupid fathers around? I say, yes Lord, in the 21st century there are some. But in that time he said, which father is there who doesn't discipline his children? But if you are without discipline, of which all children have become partakers, then if you don't have any discipline at all, then you're not really, that proves you're not a son of God. I'll tell you, I remember when my children used to play with some of our neighbor's children near our house.

And like little children, they're five, six years old, they get into little fights and all that. I never once disciplined any neighbor's child. Never.

I mean, look at all the, we have had many naughty children in CFC. I've never spanked even one of them. No.

Why? They are not my sons. But I did that with my own sons. And I think you can say that too.

How many of other people's children have you spanked? You spanked your own children. And it says here that God, if he never spanks you, you're not his child. Have you heard that? If God never gave you a spanking, you better get a checkup and see whether you're a child of God or not.

I've got many spankings. And I tell you, they all did me a world of good. Every spanking I got from God did me a lot of good.

It's made me the man I became. It's made me adore God. My children have privately and openly said they have appreciated the correction I've given them.

And they respect me even more for it. Because it's, they've seen the good that came from it. So if we see that, that God corrects us for our good, and you got to be very, very high-minded to say, God, if you want to correct me, correct me directly, not through any of your servants.

That's like you're telling the President of India, if you want to send me a letter, come to my house and give it yourself. Don't send it by post. Can you imagine talking to the President of India like that? I mean, you

should be grateful if you got a letter from the President.

But you tell him, listen, I'm not going to receive a letter from the postman. You better come yourself and give it. You wouldn't say that to the President.

You wouldn't say that to the principal of your college. You wouldn't say that to your boss. But you do say that to God.

God, if you want to discipline me, discipline me personally. Don't ever do it through any of your servants. Don't speak to God like that.

Humble yourself and say, Lord, it's up to you, whichever way you want to do it. Come to me directly or send the message through somebody else. It's fine.

And it says here in verse 9, we have had earthly fathers to discipline us. And what was the result? We respected them. I can really say that.

My boys, all of them respect me for the discipline I've given them. Then how much more shall we not be subject to the Father of all spirits and live? They disciplined us for a short time, as seemed best to them. But He disciplines us for our good.

And the purpose of all discipline is that we may share His holiness. But while the discipline is going on, verse 11, it's not joyful. Any of you got a spanking from your dad? You know that a spanking from your dad wasn't enjoyable.

Certainly not. Nobody enjoys the spanking. But afterwards, if you are trained by it instead of getting offended by it, that's very important.

Not for everybody. Afterwards, those who have been trained by it, those who get a benefit out of it, a peaceable fruit of righteousness comes through from it. But when the discipline is going on, that's not fun.

Certainly not. So we need to learn how to receive correction and not get offended in our heart, but to rejoice. God loves me.

And to respect God even more if He corrects you. I tell you, that'll save you from a lot of things. You know that verse in Proverbs 22, which says, foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child.

I think it's verse 14. But the rod of correction will drive it far from him. Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him.

And you and I as children of Adam, originally, there's a lot of foolishness bound up in our flesh. And God disciplines us to drive it far away. That's one way in which we can partake of His nature.

So that's very important. Not just that we accept correction, but that we rejoice and say, Lord, I know that's good for me. So think of the different times in the past when you were corrected or disciplined.

And ask yourself whether you got some benefit from it. If you were trained by it, that means you say, Lord, that was good for me. This is the best thing that ever happened.

That's far better than if that brother had praised me. Because this has done me a lot more good than if he had publicly praised me. Now, when you look at the scriptures, you find in the Old Testament, I don't have

time to show you all that.

But if you read the Old Testament, I think you would have come across cases where a prophet would stand up to a king and say, you're wrong. And in most cases, the king would get very upset with the prophet. One of the first examples you'll see is Samuel standing up to Saul and said, you have sinned.

And Saul didn't get very violent with Samuel because Samuel was a very godly man, respected all over Israel. And Samuel, he just said, Hey, Samuel, let's just keep this quiet. Don't let everybody know about it.

Just come along with me and just act as if nothing has happened. Okay, I admit to you that I've sinned. And Samuel said, nothing doing.

Everybody must know that I don't support what you did. You know, sometimes we do something wrong, like Saul. You can say it's a small thing.

You read 1 Samuel 15. Tell me whether you think it's a big thing. The Lord said, kill all the Amalekites and their sheep.

And Saul killed the bad sheep and kept the good sheep saying, Hey, why should we kill the good sheep? Let's offer this as a sacrifice to the Lord. Now, you would think, well, boy, what a trivial thing that is. Imagine Samuel making a big fuss over the fact that Saul, with a good motive, kept the good sheep to sacrifice it to the Lord.

I mean, couldn't Samuel give allowance for the fact that Saul had a good motive? This is the reasoning of carnal people. I've heard it in our churches for years. Oh, brother, think of the motive that was good.

Exactly. Saul's motive was good. But Samuel was a prophet who knew the mind of God.

And he knew what was good for Saul, which carnal people sometimes don't understand, because carnal people go by human reasoning. They don't know the mind of God. And Saul, Samuel said nothing doing.

God has taken away the kingdom from you. Boy, what a punishment for the fact that he didn't kill a few sheep. You read some of these stories and try and understand the mind of God.

God says, my ways are not your ways. My thoughts are not your thoughts as the heavens are higher than the earth. So are my ways different from your ways.

And I want to say to all of you, elder brothers, especially, if you don't understand God's ways, you'll never be able to build God's church. You will use your human reasoning. And you'll never act like Samuel.

And you'll just destroy your church. Be a prophet. Get to know the ways of God and his mind.

And stand for that. And don't seek for popularity. And Samuel said, sorry.

When Saul says, hey, don't let everybody know about this. Everybody's got to know about it. I'm not going to come with you.

And everybody knew. And Saul went and Samuel didn't go with him. God had given up on Saul.

But Saul could have humbled himself. He could have said to the people, folks, I was wrong. Samuel was right.

I did wrong. This is the second time I did wrong. Earlier on, I should not have gone and offered that sacrifice.

That was Samuel's job. God has only appointed me to be a king. 1 Samuel 13.

But I went and offered a sacrifice. You say, what a small thing that is. Yeah.

To human reasoning, a lot of these things are very small. But Samuel said, God has rent the kingdom from you. You read 1 Samuel chapter 13 and chapter 15 and see whether there were serious sins, according to human understanding.

And what a severe correction, what a severe punishment he got. He lost the kingship. If you don't understand God's ways, you will not be able to build God's church.

So there were many other kings like that who we read once when King Uzziah did the same mistake that Saul did, because God had blessed him in one ministry. He moved into another ministry to be a priest. And the priest went in and said, Uzziah, you're a king.

You got no business to come here to the temple and offer a sacrifice. And Uzziah got angry. And as he got angry, the leprosy came on his face.

And he had to live in as a leper all his days till he died as a leper. There were other prophets whom the kings opposed. Sometimes they would tell, lock up this prophet, put him in the dungeon, etc.

But there was one king who listened to the prophet and you know who that was. Who was that? David, right. When Nathan said, you are the man, David says, right, I am the man.

And I'm not going to just like Saul quietly tell you, I'll write a psalm and let the whole of Israel know I'm the man. And he wrote Psalm 51. He says, not only Israel, let the whole world know I did something wrong.

God says, you're a man after my own heart, David. I will call my son, Jesus, the son of David. What an honor.

What an honor. What was it that God was so delighted in? Many things, but here was one thing. He received correction.

And he humbled himself. He didn't pretend that everything was all right with him. He said, let the whole world know I was wrong.

Dear brothers and sisters, do you want to be men and women after God's own heart? Are you going to seek the empty honor of man? Or you say, Lord, I want to please you. In the New Testament, we read of Jesus, who Jesus is a great master at praising people. He was equally a great master at correcting people.

You know, in the book of Revelation, chapter two, and chapter three, you read about the Lord's messages to the seven elders. What the Lord, I just want to show you that passage in Revelation, chapter one, the last words of Jesus are in Revelation. And the Lord told John, write this to the messenger, chapter two, Revelation, chapter two, verse one, write this to the messenger of the church in Ephesus.

Before that, I want you to see this verse chapter one, verse 11. I want you to write in a book what you see, and send this to whom read carefully to whom to the seven churches in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamon, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. Did you read that? Okay.

The letters go to the seven churches. And here are people sitting in Laodicea. Okay, here's a message from the Lord.

This is not for the elder in Laodicea. This is what the condition of the elder in Ephesus. Listen, this is what the Lord says.

Now think of this. Now you would say, listen, brother, if the elder in Ephesus has committed a blunder, why tell all the other churches about it? Let's keep it quiet. Let's just tell the elder in Ephesus quietly, call him aside, and tell him, don't even tell the church.

Lord says no. Tell the church in Ephesus and tell all the seven churches what this fellow has left his first love. And tell the church in Ephesus about that Laodicean elder who's proud and thinks he's wealthy and he's good for nothing, wretched.

And the people in Ephesus are sitting and listening to all this. And you say, Lord, don't you know some of these fellows are carnal? You want this carnal fellow to listen about that elder's condition in Laodicea? The Lord says yes. How many of you would do that? That shows how far your thinking is from God's thinking.

We, you don't realize it. Many, many elder brothers in our churches, their whole way of thinking and correction is 100% psychology and human. It's not divine because they haven't studied the Bible.

And no wonder you have problems in your churches, because you think you can improve on God's way and do it the way the psychologists say, don't hurt anybody. Just call him aside and say it nicely. Show that to me in the Bible.

No, he says, tell all the churches of the condition of Ephesus and the elder there and the elder there, tell everybody. But Lord, that's humiliating. It'll test whether they humble themselves or not.

God says, my ways are not your ways. And then can you imagine the elder brother sitting there in the church and John's messenger has come and he gets up in the church and says, fellas, I want to tell you what God, the Lord has sent a message through John about your elder sitting here. This is what the Lord says.

You have left your first love. And if you don't repent, I'll take away the candlestick and goes to the church and lay this here and say, I want to tell you what the Lord says about your elder sitting here. You're wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked.

And can you imagine about 10, 15 people sitting there and ladies here who had some grudge against this elder who said, that's right. We always felt our elder was like this. Yeah, they're all in every church.

There's somebody who's got a grudge against the elder God's ways. He says, you got to be humbled and broken and crushed. And then rivers of living water will flow from you if you don't get offended.

Don't bring the principles of psychology into the Christian church. There's too much of it in the Christian television and Christian circles nowadays. And even in our midst.

I'll give you another example. Jesus was public in his praise, very often public in his correction. Matthew chapter 16, Jesus said to Peter in verse 17, publicly, blessed are you Simon bar Jonah, because flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my father who is in heaven.

And then we read that Jesus said in verse 21, I'm going to Jerusalem and I'm going to be killed. And then I'm going to be raised up on the third day. And Peter, he's this person who's been influenced by psychology.

He takes Jesus aside. I don't want to, I don't want to rebuke Jesus publicly. You know, it says he took him aside and said, Lord, this is not going to happen to you.

But Jesus doesn't take Peter aside. He turns around and says, what do you mean, Peter, get behind me, Satan. He rebukes him publicly, calls him Satan.

Boy, as many as I love, I rebuke. Because Peter, you are setting your mind not on God's interests, but man's interests. And you can't build a church like that.

I know I told you just now you're blessed, but you're not acting that way right now. And then he said to his disciples, that doesn't apply only to Peter. If any of you want to come after me, verse 24, you must also deny yourself, hate your life and follow me.

How did Peter respond to that correction? You know, there are certain things mentioned in one gospel and certain things mentioned in the other gospels. If you put all the gospels together, and if we could make a gospel, one gospel where in sequential order, everything comes. You know, what's the next thing that would come after this in sequential order? John chapter 6, where in John chapter 6, we read that Jesus said to his number of people, you got to eat my flesh and drink my blood.

Otherwise, you don't have any life in you. John 6, 53. Unless you eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood, you got no life in you.

You got to eat my flesh and drink my blood to have eternal life. Again, he repeats it. He who eats my flesh, verse 56, drinks my blood, I in him, and so on.

If you eat me, you live because of me. And when some of his disciples heard this verse 60, they said, this is a difficult statement. What are you talking about? I mean, Moses said, we shouldn't even drink blood.

But this guy is worse. He's a cannibal. He's telling us to eat his flesh.

And Jesus said, does this cause you to stumble? The words that I have spoken to you, verse 63, are spirit and life. And it says here, as a result of this, verse 66, many, not one or two, many of his disciples withdrew and left him. This is not the crowd leaving.

People who were his disciples got offended with what he taught. And they left. And Jesus said, hey, he didn't say, hey, wait, wait, wait, wait, let me explain this to you.

No, go. And he turned around to the 12, only 12 were left. What did he say to them? He said, Oh, I hope you won't leave me.

No, there was a dignity about Jesus. You want to go to? Go. And Peter replies, this person who was called Satan a little while ago, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

What are the words of eternal life? Get behind me, Satan. You're interested only in the things of man and not the things of God, Lord. These are the words of eternal life.

Where shall I go? Who will love me so much to correct me like this? Only you. Thank you, Lord. That's what made Peter the apostle he became on the day of Pentecost.

He took correction, the strongest correction that Jesus, he, Jesus didn't even call the Elder and Lady Sia a devil, the strongest correction that Jesus ever gave to a human being. He called the Pharisees wipers and snakes. He called the Elder and Lady Sia wretched, miserable, poor, blind, naked.

But he called Peter Satan. And Peter responds, saying, Lord, those are the words of eternal life. Peter may have made many mistakes, but I tell you, he didn't get offended when he was corrected.

And those things are written in Scripture to show why Peter became the man he became. Because with the strongest rebuke that probably any human being has ever got from Jesus, he passed the test. Not only passed the test, he didn't just smile and say, OK, I accept it.

He said, Lord, these are the words of eternal life. Where can I go to get words like this that will save me only from you? Others are flatterers. Others just butter me.

They won't tell me the truth. They don't care for my soul like you. You saw that I was seeking my own interest and you told me to my face that I was seeking my own interest.

Thank you, Lord. I will thank you for all eternity because it saved me from destroying myself. Peter, you are ready to be the leader of the apostles.

I know even if you fail in a moment of weakness, you denied the Lord. But never mind your attitude to correction. I have seen.

And even if there are serious failures in your life, like denying the Lord, I can help you get over them because you can. You recognize that correction is the words of eternal life. Now I want to show you another example.

In John's Gospel, chapter 12, we read about the time and after the Lazarus was raised from the dead, it says, Mary, verse three, took a pound of very costly perfume and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. And it was a very, very expensive perfume. And Judas Iscariot, who was the businessman among his disciples, he immediately evaluated that perfume.

And he said, hey, this perfume costs three hundred denary. Now, one denary was the wage of a working man for one day. You know, you know, the parable of the laborers, how the master, Matthew 20, agreed with the laborers for one denary per day.

What is the wage of a working man today? Say a hundred rupees or whatever it is per day. This is three hundred days means if you exclude the holidays, it's one year's wages of a working man. One year's wages of a working man.

Mary took that, probably a major part of her life savings, went and bought this expensive perfume and poured it at Jesus' feet. And Judas Iscariot says, what a crazy waste. We could have used this three hundred denary to give to the poor people.

This, he said, verse six, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief. And he kept the money box and used to pilfer from it. And Jesus knew it.

And Jesus said, leave her alone, Judas. He didn't say, get behind me, Satan. It's a very gentle correction.

Judas, leave her alone. Verse seven, she has done it for the day of my burial. A lot of people will come to anoint me on the Sabbath, on the Sunday morning to anoint me, and they'll discover they never get the opportunity.

But this woman wisely did it before that. So she's the only woman who will get a chance to anoint my body. Anoint the body of Jesus when you have the opportunity.

If you postpone it, you won't get a chance at all. The women who postponed it went to the tomb on the Sunday morning and they couldn't get a chance. Mary did it before.

When you get a chance to serve the Lord, serve him. You may not get the chance later on. You may not get it next week.

She has done it for my burial. And the poor, Judas, you always have the poor with you, but you won't always have me. That's all.

Was that such a big rebuke? But now see the parallel passage in Matthew 26. You know, when you put the Gospels together, you see the same thing there. Matthew 26, this woman in Bethany, and Jesus was in Bethany, verse six, and a woman came with a vial of costly perfume, verse seven, and poured it on his head, probably on his head and his feet as well.

And they said, why is this waste? But this perfume could have been sold for a very high price and the money given to the poor. That was actually Judas who said it. And Jesus said, why do you bother this woman? She's done a good deed.

You always have the poor with you. It's the same passage as in John 12, but you don't always have me because she poured this perfume on my body to prepare me for my burial. And I tell you, wherever this gospel is preached, this thing that this woman has done will be preached everywhere.

Then, listen to this, as soon as Judas got this gentle correction, then he got so worked up, he says, I've had enough of this fellow. He went, rushed to the chief priest, verse 14, and said, tell me how much you'll give me. I'll betray him.

I'm sick and tired of this fellow correcting me in front of everybody like this. What did Jesus say? Did he call him Satan? A gentle correction. He couldn't take it.

He got so angry that he went and betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. He didn't want the money because later on we read he went back and threw it back there. He wanted revenge on this person who dared to correct him in public.

You get the message? Judas also failed. Peter also failed. Why is it Peter became the leader of the apostles? And why is it that Jesus said about Judas, it is better if he was never born? Imagine Jesus saying about somebody, it's better if he was never born.

If you cannot receive correction, it is better if you were never born. I'll tell you that. If you can, if you can see correction as the words of eternal life, it will lead you to a greater anointing in the days to come.

Dear brothers and sisters, God will correct us. He will discipline us because he loves us. Why could he correct Peter so strongly? Because he knew that Peter would not get offended.

Why did he correct Judas so gently? Because he knew a little bit is enough to cause an offense. I want to ask you sisters, when your husband says some small thing, trivial thing to you, do you get offended? Such a small word. What about your husbands? If your wife says something very small, do you get offended or are you made of the tough stuff? That Peter was made of, that you can take correction and say, yes, darling, you're right.

I think I needed that word from you. I was wrong. Thank you for being my helper.

God appointed you to be my helper. Thank you for being my helper. Dear brothers and sisters, God gives us many helpers.

Have you noticed that the same word that God used for Eve in Genesis chapter two, I will make a helper for Adam, is the same word that Jesus used for the Holy Spirit in John 14. I will pray the father and he will give you another helper. Do you appreciate the Holy Spirit? And he corrects you.

It's a help. He's a helper. Do you appreciate your wife whom God has given you to help you? Do you appreciate your husband whom God has given you to help you? What about your children? Do you appreciate your father and mother whom God has given you to help you to become better human beings, not to be like the godless young people of today who are heading onwards to hell? When they tell you to, when your dad and mom tell you to give up that rock music, are you willing to listen? When they tell you to come home at a certain time, girls especially, are you willing to listen? When your parents tell you to dress a little more modestly, not to wear those tight-fitting clothes like other worldly girls do, are you willing to listen? Do you believe that they've got your good at heart? Do you believe that they want to save you from the calamity that's facing young people today? When they give you advice concerning whom you should marry, are you willing to listen or are you stubborn? You know, I'll tell you something.

If you are stubborn, one day, it may take a few years, you will reap what you have sown. Yeah, that's true. You may reap one day in your children when you get married what you are sowing with your father and mother today.

It's good for us to humble ourselves. Even if you don't agree with something, be gracious to your parents. Humble yourself, particularly if your parents are God-fearing and in the church.

Certainly, you've got to listen to what they have to say. And if you disagree, be very gracious. Don't become a headache at home.

They correct you for your good. One day, when you leave home and you set up your own home, do what you like. But as long as you're at home, listen to your dad and mom.

You will live long. It'll go well with you. Listen to your boss at work.

Listen to the elders, at least the ones you respect. They seek your good. There are great plans that God had for Peter, but they could be fulfilled only if he was radically corrected.

Otherwise, he would destroy himself. God could fulfill those plans. There were great plans that God had for Judas Iscariot, and I think part of that plan was to write the epistles.

But Judas Iscariot messed up that whole plan of God because he could not receive correction. And so God said, you missed it, Judas. I have to find somebody else to write the epistles, and he picked up Paul.

Paul got the privilege that Judas would have got. Learn to receive correction with humility, with brokenness, and say to God, Lord, these are the words of eternal life. You know how strongly Paul corrected some people in Corinth? Let me read that if you're not familiar with it.

1 Corinthians 5. Somebody who sinned in Corinth, Paul says, 1 Corinthians 5, 5. I have decided. Paul was not an elder in Corinth. There were other elders in Corinth.

But Paul was an apostle who planted that church in Corinth. And so he was over those elders, and he says, I have decided. I don't need to consult you elders on that because you guys are not strict enough.

I have decided to deliver that man to Satan. Oh, this sounds like Jesus. I've decided to deliver that person to Satan so that he will get sick in his body.

And as his body decays, he will start to wake up. And then he will repent and his soul will be saved. That's Paul's goal.

Why was he so strict in his correction? So that in the final day, he'll go to heaven. I don't want this fellow to go to hell. And the only way to save him is to get Satan to give him some sickness.

You know, I've sometimes told parents who've got rebellious children. I said, will you pray that God will break your children's legs in some car accident so that they wake up? Oh, brother Zach, no, no, no, nothing like that. Okay, you let them go to hell with two strong legs.

I said, I'll pray like that. If I see any of my children going astray, I'll say, Lord, don't kill them, give them a road accident, break their legs, something, help them to wake up. That's what Paul was praying.

A lot of parents do not love their children enough. They are soft. Psychology.

With all your psychology, you'll send your children to hell. The Bible says, don't spare him for his crying, you'll save his soul from hell. That's how soft Paul was.

I've delivered him over to Satan. He must get sick in his body. And as he's sinking, he'll wake up and his soul will be saved in the final day.

And do you know that happened? Put him out, he says. Put him out. Here it says, put that man, last part of verse 13, out of the church.

That wicked man. He calls a believer a wicked man. How would you feel if an apostle said, put that wicked sister, that wicked brother out of the church? You wouldn't think he was so Christ-like, right? He was more Christ-like than all these psychology following elders.

Because you see the result in the second chapter, episode of the Corinthians chapter 2, he says, yeah, 2nd Corinthians 2, he says, now that man, 2nd Corinthians 2, 6, he is a wicked man. He has been punished enough. Now forgive him, verse 7, comfort him, 2nd Corinthians 2, 7, and reaffirm your love for

him and bring him back into the fellowship.

See his love for this man? The whole purpose of the correction was finally to bring him back and to make him a glorious brother in the church. That's the purpose of all correction. Let's learn to receive correction in a good spirit.

Remember the words of Jesus, as many as I love, I rebuke, I discipline. Is it possible, dear brother, sister, that in past years there has been an imbalance in this area? We don't know how to receive correction properly. We received it, but not as the words of eternal life.

Is it possible that some of you elders don't love your flock enough to correct them? Don't correct people you're angry with, please. If you're angry, go and work out your own salvation. Never, I've always said, when you're angry, keep your mouth shut.

Don't even speak in the meeting when you're angry. And if you're angry with a brother, you are not fit to correct him. If you're angry with a sister, you are not fit to correct her.

You can only correct those you love. Jesus said, as many as I love, I discipline. Not as many as I'm angry with.

See, that's what happens to some elders. They're angry with somebody, say, get out of the church. That's the devil.

You're an accuser. You're not following the spirit of Christ. But if you have prayed for that person, and you've thought about it, think about it, think about it, thought about it for weeks, and then, with prayer, you correct that person, that could be in the spirit of Christ.

And you can save many souls from eternal damnation. If you love people enough to correct them, and if you love people more than you love your own honor for being known as a gentle, nice brother, who will never hurt anybody, who will never say anything rude to anyone, if you want to seek that brother, be a politician. Don't become an elder in a church.

Don't defile the church of Jesus Christ. You've chosen the wrong profession. You should go to the political field, not the church of Jesus Christ.

In the church of Jesus Christ, there's no room for this type of flattery and, you know, acting nice. If somebody needs correction, he needs correction. Let's pray.

But you're still in the church. God is giving you one more opportunity to turn, repent, and be thankful so that your soul can be saved in the final day. Heavenly Father, help us all.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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