

# Our Attitude to Corrections

by Zac Poonen

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*Having a humble attitude towards correction is essential for spiritual growth and becoming more like Christ.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 15:32, Matthew 26:14, John 6:68, Hebrews 12:6, 1 Peter 5:6, Revelation 3:19

**Topics:** "Humility And Pride", "Correction And Repentance"

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## Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of humbly accepting correction, highlighting how God uses leaders to break our strength and pride through correction. He contrasts the responses of Peter and Judas Iscariot to correction, showing how Peter's humility led to exaltation while Judas' pride led to betrayal. Poonen encourages believers to see correction as a pathway to eternal life, urging them to embrace correction even if it comes through enemies or in a public manner, emphasizing the need to cleanse ourselves from seeking the honor of men.

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## Transcript

One way in which God breaks our strength and pride is by correcting us through our leaders. Almost all believers find it very difficult to receive correction. It's not easy for even a two-year-old child to receive correction - especially if it's given publicly. When was the last time you joyfully accepted public correction? Have you accepted it even once in your life? If not, then it's not surprising that you lack spiritual authority. When someone, who is over you in the Lord, corrects you, it doesn't matter if he did it in a harsh way. You must still humble yourself under the hand of God Who allowed your leader to correct you - even if you didn't deserve the correction and even if it wasn't your fault. Jesus was publicly humiliated and falsely accused by His enemies of many things. But He never complained. And He has given us an example to follow. Even if God allows an enemy to criticize you, just ask yourself whether there's any truth in his criticism. That's all that matters. He's actually giving you a free check-up! Don't bother about how he did the "scanning" or what the motive behind the scanning was! Such matters are unimportant. All you need to ask yourself is whether the "scan" revealed some unChristlikeness in your life. Our enemies often tell us more truths about ourselves than our friends do. So we should not write off all criticism as false. If I've got a black stain on my face and an enemy points it out to me, I should be thankful to him, because he has shown me something that I couldn't have seen myself. I can then go and wash off that stain! It doesn't matter even if he said it to me with an evil motive or to humiliate me. He still helped me to cleanse myself!

This was one big difference between Peter and Judas Iscariot. When Peter told the Lord foolishly to avoid going to the cross, the Lord rebuked him sternly saying, "Get behind me, Satan". That was the strongest

rebuke that Jesus ever gave any man. Even the Pharisees were only called "vipers". But Peter was called "Satan". Jesus' strongest rebukes were reserved for those who were closest to Him. He rebukes most those whom He loves the most (Rev.3:19). Soon after that, when many disciples were getting offended with the Lord's teaching and leaving Him, the Lord asked His disciples if they too wanted to go away. It was Peter who then replied saying, "Lord to whom shall we go. You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:60, 66-68). What were the words of eternal life that Peter had heard? "Get behind me Satan"! Do we see words of correction as words meant to lead us to eternal life? That's how Peter saw correction and that's what made him the man he became. There was yet another occasion when Peter accepted correction from the Lord. Peter had told the Lord at the last supper that even if all the other disciples denied the Lord, he wouldn't. The Lord immediately replied that Peter would deny Him thrice within the next 12 hours. But Peter didn't get offended with that reply. It was such a man that the Lord finally took up and made His chief apostle and spokesman on the day of Pentecost. Because Peter humbled himself under correction, God exalted him. Having learnt from his own experience, Peter now exhorts all of us in 1 Peter.5:5,6 to humble ourselves always. We'll never lose anything by humbling ourselves. One day God will exalt us.

In contrast to Peter's attitude to correction, look at Judas Iscariot's attitude to correction. When a woman anointed Jesus with an expensive perfume, Judas said it was a waste to spend money like that, when it could have been given to the poor (John 12:5; Matt.26:10-13). Jesus corrected Judas very gently and asked him to leave the woman alone, because she had done a good work. But Judas was offended. In the very next verse (Matt.26:14), we read that Judas went immediately to the chief priests and agreed to betray Jesus. The timing of this is very significant. Judas was hurt, because Jesus had corrected him publicly. All that Jesus had told Judas was that his assessment of the woman's action was not correct. But that was enough to upset him. When you're not broken, one small thing will be enough to offend you. But look at the eternal consequences of Judas' reaction. And look at the eternal results of Peter's reaction. Both of them were tested by correction - one failed, while the other passed. Today, we're being tested in the same way. If public correction offends us, it only proves that we're seeking the honour of men. If so, it's good to know it now, so that we can cleanse ourselves from such honour-seeking. God may have allowed such a situation to show us how much we are slaves to man's opinions. Now we can cleanse ourselves and be free. So, let's have Peter's attitude to correction at all times - whether the Lord corrects us directly by His Spirit or through someone else. This is the pathway of eternal life for all of us. If we humble ourselves, we'll receive grace from God and He will exalt us at the right time.

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