

UPCOMING EVENTS

All events are at the church unless otherwise indicated.

July

- GriefShare – Sundays 7/23, 7/30 4-6pm
- Pastor Dave's Retirement Party – Sunday 7/30 after church service

August

- Park Play Dates – Wednesdays 8/2, 8/16 11-12:30pm
- Benevolent/Communion Sunday – 8/6
- GriefShare – Sundays 8/6, 8/13, 8/20, 8/27
- Care Giver Support – Thursday 8/17 6pm at Casa Maria Restaurant

Recommended Reading: *Raising Men, Not Boys*, by Mike Fabarez. This book contains some of the most biblical, relevant, insightful and practical information on parenting that I have ever come across. The practical advice is particularly noteworthy for its creativity and applicability to 21st century life. While the book is primarily intended for parents of young men, there is plenty here that can assist in raising girls as well. The book also deals with the case of single parents. If you are a parent of children of whatever age, I would highly recommend this book.

Summer Park Play Days: Pack a sack lunch, bring your lawn chairs and picnic blankets, and come play with other Moms and kids at the church playground from 11-12:30 on the first and third Wednesdays of each month this summer. Park Play Days are 8/2 and 8/16.

Israel Trip: Pastor Scott and Ken Sudduth are leading a group from Eaton Community Church to the Holy Land March 1-10 of 2024 with an optional five-day extension into Egypt. There are a **few spots still left** so get your deposit and paperwork into Ken. Walk where Jesus walked, follow the Via Dolorosa, be baptized in the Jordan River, worship in a fishing boat on the Sea of Galilee, visit the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane, have communion and celebrate Jesus' Resurrection at the Garden Tomb. This is truly a life changing and life enriching experience that you must take advantage of and not miss! For more information contact Ken Sudduth at ksudduth@cruiseplanners.com.

Faith Day at the Rockies: Sunday, August 20 at 1pm, the Colorado Rockies will be playing the Chicago White Sox. Immediately following the game, Hillsong United will be performing. Tickets are \$18. If interested, please contact John Bowness at (970)576-0426.

EATON COMMUNITY CHURCH WELCOMES YOU!

JULY 23, 2023

Prelude Don Reasoner

Welcome & Announcements Pastor Scott

Truthseeker Mission Team Report Karla Bowness

Memory Verse **Job 23:10** – “But he knows the way that I take;
when he has tried me, I shall come out as gold.”

Scripture Reading Hebrews 12:5-15 Pastor Scott

Worship in Prayer

Call to Worship Psalm 13:5

Worship in Song:

- “Praise You In This Storm”
- “I Will Fix My Eyes On Jesus”
- “Cornerstone/The Solid Rock

Children Dismissed (1st grade and under)

Worship in the Word Pastor Dave
“Why This Terrible Experience”

Worship in Song “I Surrender All”

Benediction Pastor Dave



CONTRIBUTIONS BUDGET FOR 2023
\$598,780

Year-To-Date		Weekly	
Budget:	\$322,712	Budget:	\$11,128
Actual:	\$297,233	Actual:	\$10,475
Difference:	\$24,233	Difference:	\$653

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE: 211

Staff

Senior Pastor.....	Dave McNeff
Pastor of Adult Ministry.....	Scott Wilson
Director of Children’s and Youth Ministry.....	Karla Bowness
Administrative Assistant.....	Kirby Lawhead
Director of Music.....	Don Reasoner

Why This Terrible Experience?

(Hebrews 12: 5-15)

July 23, 2023

I. To Demonstrate God's _____

II. To Produce _____

A. By Highlighting _____

B. By Revealing _____

C. To Remove _____

III. To Build a Basis for _____

Other Scripture Cited: Job 23:10; Heb 4:15; Psa 119:67; Gal 5:22-23; Jn 15:5; Luke 10:41-42; II Cor 12:9-10; Rom 8:18

Sermons available on Video, Audio and notes at eatoncc.org

Why This Terrible Experience?

(Hebrews 12: 5-15)

Read Heb 12:5-15 – Two Russians are waiting in a long line in the bitter winter cold. One says, “*This is enough. Eight hours to get a roll of toilet paper! I’m going to Moscow to finish off Putin.*” Next day he’s back, tail between his legs. His friends ask, “*How come you’re back?*” “*Ah, it’s no use. The line there is even longer than here!*” Everybody’s got problems!

Life is tough. It starts early. You’re barely out of the womb and some guy’s holding you upside down and slapping your bottom. You just get used to Mother’s milk and suddenly you get something awful -- baby food cuz you have no teeth. You get some teeth and next thing, they’re pulling them. School seems okay, until you find out about math! Then high school. As someone said, “*Every class in high school is drama class!*” Life’s tough.

I can’t control life; I can’t even control me. You say, “*I’m never going to lose my temper again.*” Within 10 minutes your husband trims your favorite shrub into the shape of a football and you are forced to get mad. Your wife throws out your favorite 20-year-old holey sweatshirt (“holy” to you and “holey” to her), and you are forced to get mad. Layoffs happen, children stray, marriages break up and friends die of cancer. Life is tough.

Sermons suggest the Christian life should be a luxury ride on cloud 9. But that’s not MY experience, so we ask, “*Why THIS terrible experience? Why this whole raft of terrible experiences?*” Where’s God? Well, the writer to Hebrews has answers for others who were going thru persecution far greater than ours. Why this terrible experience? Here’s why!

I. To Demonstrate God’s Love

Really?! I got fired today; that’s love!? But look: ⁵ “*And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. ⁶For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.” ⁷It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ⁸If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.”*

Three truths there. 1) God loves us as we are. 2) God won’t leave us where we are. 3) God feels our pain as we are. Parents love their kids. So, why time outs? Why grounding? Why get give them shots, dig out splinters, operate

medically? ***It hurts!*** But ***we look ahead to the greater good***, right? So does God, through terrible experiences, big and little. Every hurt is God saying, ***“I love you so much. This isn’t forever, but you need it now.”***

Examples of God testing range from God asking Abraham to sacrifice Isaac to Joseph being tempted by Potiphar’s wife to Jesus himself going through extreme temptation. ***We are not exempt!*** But it’s all for good reason. ***Job 23:10***, ***“But He knows the way that I take; When he has tried me, I shall come out as gold.”*** He allows pain for our ***greater good***. Bc He cares.

And ***He feels!*** In a Little Rascals episode, Spanky gets in trouble. He’s about to get spanked. So, he loads up his pants with a couple of books. Dad finds them and utters those famous words, ***“Son, this hurts me as much as it does you.”*** To which Spanky replies, ***“Yeah, but not in the same place.”***

Listen, Jesus cares: ***Heb 4:15***: ***“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.”*** Jesus knows; Jesus cares. In one of the *Narnia Chronicles* a choice saint dies. Aslan, looking on in mourning begins to weep. And in Lewis’ words, ***every tear was more precious than the earth would be if it were a solid diamond***. I remember my own father on occasion crying even as he spanked me, and I tell you it had an impact. ***God loves you too much to allow wasted pain in your life.***

II. To Produce Holiness

Second purpose: ¹⁰***“For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness.”*** Leo Durocher, an old baseball manager, coined the phrase, ***“Nice guys finish last.”*** Maybe in the NL, but not in God’s book. Holiness is good for Him; and good for us! Adversity creates it.

A. By Highlighting Known Sin

We all have it. But we ***disguise*** and ***hang on*** to it. It takes a 2X4 upside the head to get our attention! It starts young. We steal a cookie. Expected lightning doesn’t come. We’re hooked. We become expert at covering, coddling sin. Cheating on taxes = good business. Selfishness = good self-image. Temper = righteous indignation. Gluttony, lust, addictions we tolerate as ***not hurting anyone else***. It ***takes a fiery trial*** to rein us in.

An oilman had a well on fire. The expert wanted \$100,000. But Joe Blow said he’d put it out for \$15,000. Joe arrived with a pickup full of helpers. But rather

than stopping, the truck zoomed into the middle of the fire. Guys scrambled out, stomping, beating, throwing buckets of water on the fire until it was out. With hair smoking and eyebrows singed, Joe said, *“Can I have my money?”* The guy said, *“I’ve never seen an oil fire put out like that. Here’s your pay. What are you going to do with it?”* Joe said, *“Well, first I’m going to get some new brakes for that doggone old pickup!”*

Took a fiery trial to deal with a problem. David said: **Psalm 119:67**: *“Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word.”* So, when adversity reveals *an issue I’m ignoring*, confess it, leave it, move on!

B. By Revealing Unknown Sin

Sometimes the grip of adversity squeezes out previously unknown flaws – pride, selfishness, intolerance, we don’t see. Bruce Catton reports during the cleanup after Gettysburg, 26,000 rifles were recovered. 13,000 were loaded with 2 charges. *Someone re-loaded without firing*. Another 6,000 of those weapons had between 3 and 10 charges loaded in them. These were battle-hardened vets. They knew how to load and shoot. *But life-and-death pressure of battle exposed serious, but unknown flaws*.

So God squeezes us thru discipline, revealing new levels of selfishness, lack of faith, and intolerance. *It’s a divinely orchestrated chance to take corrective action*. Every day is a test. Did I pass or did I fail?

C. To Remove Excess

Xns are notorious for confusing *good* with *best*. Discipline aims at fixing that. ¹¹⁾*“For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”* Healthy plants can send all nutrition to leaves. But – *no fruit*. Nothing wrong with leaves, but the plants purpose is fruit! What’s needed? *Pruning!* *Prune good* to get *best*.

Gal 5:22-23a defines Xn fruit: *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.”* Those come from being with Him. *To the extent we lack fruit, we lack Him*. The problem is our effort is going to leaves. The enemy here is not sin but *busyness*, excess effort, good things that rob from best things.

So, you may be doing good things – supporting a family, ministry at church, community involvement. But have you love, joy, peace, etc. from being with Him? Jesus said: **Jn 15:5**: *“I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever*

abides in me and I in him, he it is that *bears much fruit*, for *apart from me you can do nothing*.” No abiding; no fruit! If you’re too busy for THAT, you are too busy. The Enemy loves us to choose good over best!

So – *God prunes*. Removes some leaves. Saul made David try his armor to fight Goliath? It was *too much of a good thing*. Would have led to defeat. When Martha complained Mary wasn’t helping in the kitchen Jesus replied: **Luke 10:41-42**: “*Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things,*”⁴² *but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.*” Discipline helps say NO to *good*, to get to *best*. It helps rid of of excess which hold us back.

Joseph -- lost his coat – twice. First his multi-colored gift from Dad was taken when his bros sold him into slavery. Then, he lost his coat again when he fled the sexual advances of his master’s wife. That got him years in Egyptian prison. *Did God love him*? YES! Enough to trim the excess of pride and self-sufficiency so he could use him to preserve his family and particularly, the Messianic line thru Judah. *So, expect to lose some coats to get Him*. The fires of purging aren’t fun – but they are worth it.

III. To Build a Basis for Ministry

God’s discipline prepares us for ministry. 15) See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled.”

We’re to see that no one ¹⁵“*fails to obtain the grace of God*.” What’s that about? Paul had an affliction God refused to remove despite earnest prayer. God told him, “*Paul it’s not going away. It’s there for a reason. But, Paul,* **II Cor 12: 9**: *My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness*.” Paul was at a crossroads. He could embrace God’s grace to bear his burden – OR he could refuse grace and become a twisted old man cursing the unfairness. *Become bitter, or to become better*.

Paul chose better: **II Cor. 12:9b-10**: “I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” Paul’s response shows us *God will never waste our pain, but will use it to grace others*.

So, even when hurting, we are to, ¹⁵“*See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God*; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled.” When it gets tough, and you can’t change it, *apply*

for God's grace. "When you can't see His hand, trust His heart." Then watch how your example will encourage others.

In April, 1982, I got a call one day you never want to get. It was Bro Jon. His 2-year-old Charlie, sneaked out a patio door, fell into a pool and was in a coma. I rushed to the hospital in time to watch Charlie die in the arms of his parents. It was devastating. It's one thing to know these things happen. It was entirely another to go with Jon and Anne to pick out a little coffin in which to bury their son who had been so alive a day before. Family comforted Jon and Anne as best we could. But the person Jon most wanted to talk to? Pastor Loren. He'd also lost a young son 6 years earlier. He was able to minister to them in a way none of us could possibly do. Thru the years Jon and Anne have ministered to many others as well because they did not fail of the grace of God. Rather, they desperately embraced an almost unbearable human difficulty. Rather than become bitter, they've helped countless others to believe God when it doesn't seem possible.

It reminds me how Corrie Ten Boom, telling of her unspeakable experiences in Nazi concentration camps where her own sister, Betsey, died, said: "God calls some people to go through the worst that life can offer to show that nothing is too deep for God." So, in our terrible time, we must not fail of the grace of God, or grasp the unbearable -- desperately pulling ourselves and others to the God who is worthy of all trust.

Conc – Terrible experiences are as simple as a flat tire – as painful as a broken arm, arthritis, broken marriage or critical spouse – as unbearable as a terminal disease or death of a loved one. They are real; they are constant; and they hurt. But every one is an opportunity to get bitter or get better, to grow or to stagnate or worse. God urges – Don't fail of my grace! Whatever your hardship today, it's there bc He treasures you. Remember: **Rom 8:** ¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

If you visit the Ford museum in Dearborn, MI, you'll find a little shack that was the office of Charlie Steinmetz. He was a small man with a big mind – an electrical genius. It was said he could design a motor in his mind; it would break down in his mind and he could redesign it flawlessly without ever committing it to paper. Henry Ford hired him to set up the motors that drove Ford's first assembly line plant. One day, the motors broke down. Money was being lost every second they were down, but the maint guys could not fix the problem. Steinmetz was called in. He poked around for a while and made adjustments here and there. After two hours he threw the switch, and all ran perfectly. A few days later Ford got a bill for \$10,000. Ford was rich, but that

seemed excessive. He sent back to Steinmetz saying, “*Isn’t this a little steep for a couple of hours of tinkering on those motors?*?” Steinmetz sent back a revised invoice: “*For two hours tinkering, \$10. For knowing where to tinker, \$9,990.*” You get the point. God knows where to tinker on you and me. Adversity is one tool He uses. So embrace the tinkering. It’s because He loves you. That makes all the difference. Let’s pray.

[Alternative last paragraph] You probably haven't heard of Charlie Steinmetz, but he was pretty well known in his day as one of the great electrical geniuses of his time. It was said that he could design a motor in his mind, it would break down in his mind and he could redesign it in his mind without the flaw before ever committing to paper. He got to know Henry Ford and was hired to set up the motors that drove Ford's first production line plant in Dearborn, Michigan. One day the motors broke down and, of course, money was being lost every minute that the line was stalled. The regular maintenance men worked on it for several hours but could not fix the problem. Finally, Steinmetz was called in. He came in and looked around, and then began adjusting a little here and there. After a couple of hours he threw the switch and everything ran. A few days later Henry got a bill from Steinmetz for \$10,000. Well Ford was rich, but he intended to stay that way, so rather than pay the bill, he sent back a letter asking, "Isn't this kind of steep for a couple of hours of tinkering on those motors. In reply, Steinmetz sent him a revised invoice which read, "For tinkering

Our terrible experiences come in a wide variety. But make no mistake, they are all real and they all provide an opportunity *to fail or to prosper, to become bitter or to become better*. It can be as small as the inconvenience of a flat tire or a broken dishwasher, a lost treasure or a failure to make the team. It can be as physically painful as a broken arm, an arthritis or something which cannot be diagnosed. It can be as emotionally painful as the break-up of a dating relationship, a marriage, or the trauma of a rebellious child. It can be the daily frustration of a tough drive, a difficult boss or a critical family member, be it parent, spouse or child, or unmet financial obligations. It can be as deep as an incurable disease, the death of a friend or loved one or the betrayal of our own marriage partner.

But I urge us all, whatever it is in your life, don't fail of the grace of God. Realize first of all that nothing can touch you that God does not allow and His intention is ALWAYS loving. The Bible goes so far as to urge us to **"Consider it all joy when you encounter various trials" (James 1:2)**. It's a test lovingly administered to help us deal with known and unknown sin, to remove sin and excess from our lives and to show God's glory to others in ways which would not otherwise be possible.

During the late stages of our country's Civil War a very secret conference was held on a river boat which included representatives from the South headed by Vice President Stevens and delegates from the Union, originally intended to be headed by Secretary of State Seward, but eventually including President Abraham Lincoln himself. For hours the men hovered over a map as the

southern visitors pointed out various territories they would return to the Union in exchange for the remainder of the South being given independence. Finally in exasperation, Lincoln covered the entire South with his hand and said, "Gentlemen, this government must have the whole." So God, by His loving discipline is covering us with His hand and saying in effect, "Son, daughter, I must have the whole? What Satan means for ill, I will turn to good. Questions will always abound about the fairness of it all in this life. But this life isn't all!" That puts us at a fork in the road – "Rebel and get bitter or Believe and get better." Happiness lies in the latter.

[Alternative last paragraph] You probably haven't heard of Charlie Steinmetz, but he was pretty well known in his day as one of the great electrical geniuses of his time. It was said that he could design a motor in his mind, it would break down in his mind and he could redesign it in his mind without the flaw before ever committing to paper. He got to know Henry Ford and was hired to set up the motors that drove Ford's first production line plant in Dearborn, Michigan. One day the motors broke down and, of course, money was being lost every minute that the line was stalled. The regular maintenance men worked on it for several hours but could not fix the problem. Finally, Steinmetz was called in. He came in and looked around, and then began adjusting a little here and there. After a couple of hours he threw the switch and everything ran. A few days later Henry got a bill from Steinmetz for \$10,000. Well Ford was rich, but he intended to stay that way, so rather than pay the bill, he sent back a letter asking, "Isn't this kind of steep for a couple of hours of tinkering on those motors. In reply, Steinmetz sent him a revised invoice which read, "For tinkering around on the motors -- \$10. For knowing where to tinker -- \$9,990."

May I say this morning that when the hard times come we should actually glory in the fact that it is God somehow tinkering in our lives knowing two things – 1) He knows where to tinker and 2) even if our trouble is meant for evil by Satan (as was Paul's) God absolutely will turn it to good if we give it to Him. It may not make any sense from a human perspective. Questions will always abound about the fairness of it all in this life. But this life isn't all! Through every difficulty, God is bringing us to one more test, one more fork in the road where we have the choice, -- Rebel and get bitter, Believe and get better. Happiness surely lies in the latter.

A young man was laboriously carrying two huge boxes down the street one day when a lady asked if he knew what time it was. He stopped, set his boxes down, looked at his watch and said, "It's 12:00 in California, 3:00 in New York and 8:00 in London. The stock market is up 10. Gold is down \$3 an ounce. Silver is up 50 cents an ounce. It's 89 degrees with a relative humidity of 60%, and there are tornadoes off the coast of Texas." "Wow," said the lady, "what a watch!" "Yeah," said the young man, "but carrying around these batteries is killing me." He had a little excess, you see. And that brings us to the third way discipline produces holiness, and that is by *removing* excess.

Notice verse 11 once again,

The Lord clearly intends that every Christian have a ministry of service to others. I heard of one lady who called her son one Sunday morning, urging him to get up because it was almost time for church. After the third call and no response, she went to his room to see what was up. "I'm not going," he said. "Not that it's an option," replied his mother, "but why don't you want to go?" "I have two good reasons. I don't like those people and they don't like me." "Well," said the mother, let me give you two good reasons why you ARE going to go. First, you are 39 years old. And second, you're the pastor."