BREAKING THE CYCLE BY CHANGING HOW I RECEIVE AND RESPOND TO INSTRUCTION

Bishop P. O. Rodgers, ThD | Tuesday Bible Study

Primary Scripture

Hebrews 12:11

Big Idea

Destructive cycles begin to change when we humbly receive God's correction and consistently practice His instruction, depending on His grace to grow.

Introduction

It is possible to hear the truth, agree with the truth, and still avoid the changes the truth requires. We may recognize a harmful pattern while continuing to defend it. We may welcome instruction until it touches a habit we do not want to surrender.

This study asks us to consider what happens after we receive instruction. God's correction calls for a response. Will we become offended, lose heart, or allow Him to train us?

Hebrews 12 places discipline within the relationship between a loving Father and His children. His purpose is our good and our growth in holiness. The discomfort is real, and so is the fruit He intends to produce as we yield to Him.

"What you refuse to correct today can become the cycle you repeat tomorrow."

Key Teaching Points

1. Godly correction has a purpose beyond the discomfort

Scripture connection: Hebrews 12:11

Correction may be uncomfortable. Accountability can challenge our pride, and changing familiar habits may require sacrifice. Hebrews 12:11

acknowledges that discipline can feel painful in the present while directing our attention to its later fruit.

Notice that this fruit develops in those who are trained by discipline. Growth involves receiving what God is teaching and allowing it to shape our conduct. Simply experiencing discomfort does not mean we have learned from it.

When correction comes, we can ask, **“What is God teaching me, and what response would show that I am receiving it?”** That question moves us toward the purpose of the correction.

2. The fruit of correction is a life increasingly shaped by righteousness and peace

Scripture connection: Hebrews 12:4, 11; Romans 14:17

The word translated “peaceable” in Hebrews 12:11 is *eirēnikos*, which carries the sense of being peaceful or producing peace. The teaching connects this fruit with surrendering our resistance to God’s instruction.

Hebrews 12:4 speaks of striving against sin. As we yield to correction, we stop defending the very behavior God is addressing and begin practicing what is right. The struggle with a particular instruction gives way to surrender and obedience. We continue growing as we face temptation and learn to follow Him.

Romans 14:17 describes life in God’s kingdom in terms of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. These are the qualities the message calls us to pursue as we respond to our Father’s loving work.

3. Receive correction without dismissing it or losing heart

Scripture connection: Hebrews 12:5, 9

Hebrews 12:5 identifies two responses we must resist: despising the Lord’s correction and becoming discouraged under His rebuke.

We can despise correction by minimizing it, explaining it away, or deciding that it applies to everyone except us. We can also lose heart, treating the need for correction as a reason to give up on growth.

Hebrews 12:9 points us toward reverence and submission to the Father. We can take His instruction seriously and trust His love at the same time. A teachable response sounds like this: **“Lord, help me receive what You are showing me and make the necessary adjustment.”**

4. The same instruction can produce different outcomes

Scripture connection: Hebrews 12:11

Consider the two people in the message who receive the same correction. One becomes offended and walks away. The other examines their heart and makes the necessary adjustment.

Both received the same instruction. Their responses produced different outcomes.

“The difference was not the availability of truth. It was their willingness to respond to truth.”

This illustration asks us to examine more than what we have heard. What have we changed because we heard it? A willing heart allows instruction to move from something we understand into something we practice.

“You cannot mature spiritually while continually resisting the very truth God is using to develop you.”

5. A different harvest requires a different response to the seed

Scripture connection: Hebrews 12:11

The two farmers receive the same quality of seed and have access to fertile ground. Both understand the importance of planting. One follows instruction, prepares the soil, plants the seed, and faithfully tends the field. The other ignores the instruction.

When harvest season arrives, their results are different. The difference is what they did with what they received.

In the message’s illustration, God’s Word is good seed. We receive it with an open heart and put it into practice through faithful obedience. Hearing a lesson about forgiveness, accountability, or self-control gives us something to act on. The next step is to begin living what we have learned.

“You cannot expect a different harvest while continually practicing the same destructive habits!”

6. Teachability receives the instruction and discipline sustains the practice

Scripture connection: Hebrews 12:11

The message makes a distinction we need to understand:

- **“An unteachable spirit rejects the instructions for change.”**
- **“An undisciplined spirit neglects the actions required for change.”**

We can resist change before it starts by refusing instruction. We can also agree with instruction but fail to follow through. Spiritual growth requires a willing heart and consistent action.

“Correction reveals what needs to change, but discipline helps establish the habits that sustain change.”

For example, receiving correction about how we speak is a beginning. Practicing a pause, listening fully, and responding with care gives that instruction a place in our daily lives. Discipline keeps bringing us back to obedience after the initial conversation is over.

“The evidence that you received the Word is not simply that you heard it, but that you are learning to live it.”

7. God supplies grace for both the desire and the action

Scripture connection: Philippians 2:13

The call to change comes with hope. Philippians 2:13 teaches that God is at work in His people both “to will and to do” for His good pleasure. His work reaches our desires and our actions.

We can ask Him to change what we want, strengthen our willingness to receive instruction, and help us take the next obedient step. His grace supports the response He calls us to make.

An unteachable attitude does not have to remain our pattern. An undisciplined life does not have to remain our identity. Through repentance, renewed thinking, obedience, and the power of the Holy Spirit, destructive cycles can be broken.

“God is not merely trying to change your circumstances; He is transforming the person who responds to those circumstances.”

Supporting Scriptures

- **Hebrews 12:4–5:** Places the discussion in the struggle against sin and warns against dismissing correction or becoming discouraged by it.
- **Hebrews 12:9:** Calls us to respect and submit to our heavenly Father as He corrects us.
- **Romans 14:17:** Describes kingdom life through righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.
- **Philippians 2:13:** Grounds our hope for change in God's work within our desires and actions.

Reflection / Discussion Questions

1. Hebrews 12:11 connects the fruit of discipline with being trained by it. What is the difference between going through correction and allowing correction to train you?
2. When instruction challenges your habits, how do you tend to respond? What does that response reveal about your willingness to grow?
3. **What has God been teaching you that you have been refusing to receive?**
4. **What has God taught you that you have not consistently practiced?**
5. In the two-farmer illustration, which part most closely describes your present challenge: receiving instruction, preparing, planting, or consistently tending what has been planted? Why?
6. **What cycle could begin to change if you became both teachable and disciplined?**
7. How does Philippians 2:13 help you approach an area where you lack either the desire to change or the consistency to follow through?
8. What specific response this week would show that you are learning to live the Word you have received?

Practical Application

Choose one correction to receive and one habit to practice this week.

1. **Name the instruction.** Write one sentence identifying something God has been addressing through His Word. Be specific about the attitude, habit, or response that needs to change.

2. **Acknowledge your resistance.** Identify where you have defended the pattern, postponed obedience, or agreed without following through. Bring that honestly to God in repentance.

3. **Choose a repeatable action.** Decide what obedience will look like when the situation happens again. If you repeatedly interrupt, practice

letting the other person finish and summarizing what you heard before responding. If you agree to responsibilities but fail to follow through, record the commitment and take the first step when you agree to it.

4. **Invite accountability.** Ask a trusted, spiritually mature person to check in about that specific action. Give them a clear question to ask, such as, "What did you do differently when that situation came up?"

5. **Pray and review.** Each day, ask God to work in both your willingness and your actions. At the end of the week, identify where you obeyed, where you resisted, and what adjustment you need to continue practicing.

Personal response:

"The instruction I need to receive is _____. The habit I will practice is _____. I will ask _____ to check in with me."

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for loving us enough to correct and develop us. Forgive us for the times we have resisted Your instruction, defended destructive habits, or agreed with Your Word without putting it into practice. Give us humble hearts that receive truth and the discipline to follow through. When correction is uncomfortable, help us trust Your purpose and keep growing. Work in our desires and our actions so that our lives increasingly reflect righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Show each of us the next obedient step, and strengthen us to take it consistently. In Jesus' name, amen.