

Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further ***International Bible Lessons***

Hebrews 12:1-13

Sunday, October 30, 2016

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

Some Bible study groups or classes can further discussion by asking some or all of the **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** below. Others may want to send the bulletin size *International Bible Lesson* home with their students for further study in the coming week to encourage continuing Bible study. The *Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further* below are not actually intended to be *the answers* to the discussion questions. These indeed are “hints” a teacher may use to help students think through and discuss the questions in class. The *Class Preparation Guide* includes the questions below, and it can be given to students at the end of the previous class so they can pray, read, and think ahead to prepare for the next week’s Bible class.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. What joy do you set before you that makes suffering for Jesus worthwhile to you?

Probably many different answers will be given to this question. Some may look forward with joy to going to heaven; some may look forward to seeing Jesus in heaven;

some may look forward to seeing their loved ones in heaven; some may look forward to seeing those they have helped in their Christian faith in heaven; some may look forward to bowing before God the Father and Jesus Christ when they see them on the throne of God in heaven and joining with the multitude of angels and other believers in praise, adoration and thanksgiving to God; some may look forward to hearing the Lord say to them, “Well done! Good and faithful servant.”

2. What are some of the ways that believers can still suffer persecution for their faith in Jesus and living according to His teachings in a country where believers supposedly have the freedom to practice their faith without fear of persecution?

Some ways may include being bullied or teased, being excluded when others get together for different meetings or events, being denied a promotion at work, or being fired from a job, being mocked by unbelieving family and friends, having your freedom of speech denied by vocal protestors and physical assailants, being refused protection.

3. God will teach you how to live through Bible study, but are you also truly willing for God to train or discipline you to make your faith more perfect?

Some who say they believe in Jesus avoid Bible study, while others think Bible study is all they need to do to be a good follower of Jesus. Some follow Jesus when convenient, but how many pray and ask Jesus to discipline them and put them into a training program that will make their faith and faithfulness to God perfect?

4. How might you define God's discipline because of sins in contrast to God's punishment because of sins?

Discipline in the moral realm is designed to correct a moral problem or change sinful behavior. Punishment in the moral realm is the result of refusing to correct a moral problem or change sinful behavior. Some types of suffering will influence some to change their behavior; therefore, it serves as discipline. Some types of suffering is the result of refusing to change behavior; therefore, it serves as punishment. God the Father will discipline a child of God in ways that will influence the child to change their behavior. God will allow the rebellious or sinful person, who does not want God as their Father, to suffer the just consequences of their unjust behavior, which is punishment.

5. How many times do Christians invite new believers to come to faith in Jesus Christ with the promise that God will train and discipline them,

perhaps painfully, so their faith will grow and mature and become perfect in Jesus?

Many times Christians talk about the many blessings that believers in Jesus Christ receive from God their heavenly Father. Sometimes people will come to believe in Jesus Christ in order to receive these promised blessings. One great blessing from becoming a child of God through faith in Jesus Christ is receiving the promise that God will discipline and train us to become perfect in faith and prepared for heaven. Perhaps some fear that telling a new believer about the promise of discipline would influence them to count the cost of discipleship and conclude that the price was too high to accept.

© Copyright 2016 L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.
You may reprint or reproduce
Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further
for not-for-profit use.