

A Key to Christian Growth

(Go To Meeting)

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There are some things in our Christian lives that we might find more difficult and challenging to accomplish as we continue our journey to the Kingdom of God.

Some of those things we might include, and I've listed four items here just as an introduction to my topic:

1. to rejoice in our trials

That's a difficult one because we know that trials do help us to grow closer to God and appreciate the fact that we do need God. Yet, it's difficult to rejoice, but that's what He wants us to do, even in our sicknesses and troubles that we go through. We can always rejoice in God no matter what.

2. forgive others sincerely from the heart
3. to pray for and love our enemies

That's what Christ told us to do. Not only to love one another and God the Father and Christ and the brethren, but we are to love our enemies. To pray for them, even those who persecute us. That's a challenge, is it not?

4. to accept correction gracefully

This is what I'm going to be speaking on, and this may be a more serious topic, but it's one that is important. It's so critical relative to our growth and overcoming the issues in our lives that we need to change and correct.

Why is it important that we accept correction gracefully? *I'm going to address this point because it's a critical factor in our growth and development* in taking on the reminding character of Jesus Christ.

Brethren, we're not perfect, yet. We are still in the flesh and we need to recognize that **accepting correction gracefully** is truly a key to our growth and overcoming the sins and difficulties in our lives today.

Remember, receiving correction no matter the source, we need to receive it in a right attitude, because it will reproduce good results in the end in our Christian growth and overcoming.

Now, one person in the Scriptures who truly understood this was David. He had a right attitude toward correction, and he wrote:

Psalms 141:5: "Let the righteous strike me in kindness, and let him correct me; it is choice oil upon my head; let not my head refuse it..."

This is a strange way to say "Let the righteous strike me..." It shows that it can be painful and difficult to receive correction; yet, David recognized that this was a valuable part of His life, to receive correction. Why? *Because he knew that it would make him wiser and help him to grow, change and overcome!*

Proverbs 9:8: "Do not reprove a scorner, lest he hate you... [reprove can also mean *correct*] ...**give rebuke**... [correct] ...**to a wise man, and he will love you**... [what a contrast] ...**Give instruction to a wise one, and he will be still wiser; teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning**" (vs 8-9).

So, we begin to see that correction is a valuable element that we need to incorporate into our Christian living.

- How much do you value proper correction when it comes your way?
- How well do you receive it when it comes/given?

We need to be honest with ourselves; receiving correction is not easy. We might find it most difficult. We really don't like to be corrected.

One of the hardest things for a person to do is to accept correction gracefully and admit that one has made a mistake or had committed an error in what he has said or done.

Our first tendency is to deny and resist taking responsibility for the things that we have done wrong, for the faults and even for our sins:

- because of our human nature
- because of the pride that still resides in all of us

It's something that we need to be aware of and be cognizant of!

Let's understand very clearly that correction can come from many different directions and many different sources. It can come from our mates—husbands/wives. For us who are married and have mates, we know that this is something that does occur, perhaps quite frequently, because our mates know us very well. When we begin to make errors, or do things that are not correct, our mates are quick to correct us. I find that true in my house, but that's good, because I know that it helps me.

On the other hand, it kind of jolts you, 'Oh, I did make a mistake, I've got to change.' *Our first*

tendency is to **deny and resist** taking responsibility because of our human nature!

We can receive correction from other brethren, other people, but we can also receive correction from the Word of God. And that is indeed a key point. ***The Word of God is a key Source for correction, and we need to be open to that!*** Notice what the Scriptures say.

When we decide not to heed correction, and perhaps shy away from accepting responsibility, we may be reaping the consequences of really not accepting correction and changing.

Prov. 1:29-33 focuses on this very topic; the consequences of not accepting correction.

Proverbs 1:29: “Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD, they would have none of My counsel... [God talking] ...they despised all My correction. Therefore, they shall eat the fruit of their own way and be filled with their own devices. For the waywardness of the simple shall slay them, and the complacency of fools destroys them.... [notice the contrast]: ...**But whoever hearkens to Me....** [to hear and do, respond] ...**shall dwell safely and shall be secure without fear of harm**” (vs 29-33).

Let’s understand that God’s correction is so very important to us, so we can change our conduct. So, we can grow in righteous character.

As God’s people we need to strive and understand the need to have a positive attitude toward accepting correction, have a willing heart to admit our faults and to work toward correcting our conduct whether in word or in deed. Accepting correction gracefully is a sign of true humility and a willingness to repent.

What we’re going to see in this message is to accept correction gracefully is connected to our willingness to repent and to change. It is connected, because we cannot change *until we accept correction*, so it all comes together. Understand that this is an area that we need to be aware of, because sometimes people just aren’t aware of their own nature in trying to resist correction.

We can find other words in the Bible that refer or mean the same as correction. Some of those words include:

- rebuke
- give admonishment
- reprove
- chastise
- discipline
- instruction

We receive instruction from the Word of God; therefore, this is going to turn out to be a major source of correction for us who are learning and growing in the very nature of God, and overcoming the way of the flesh!

The English word for *correction*, which is translated from the Greek word in the New Testament: ‘epanorthosis’: meaning *a straightening up, to rectify; to correct or make right*.

We all understand correction, but this gives a broader understanding of the word in terms of the Scriptures.

As we are learning, Proverbs has a great deal to tell us about correction. They all truly not only make sense, but they also tell us something about why we need to seek proper correction.

Proverbs 10:17: “He who keeps instruction *is* in the way of life, but he who refuses reproof goes astray.”

In other words, we’re able to keep on the straight and narrow when we accept correction and being able to not be swayed from our journey to the Kingdom.

Proverbs 12:1: “Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, but he who hates correction *is* stupid.” *That’s a pretty blunt way of putting it!*

Proverbs 15:10: “There *is* grievous correction for him who forsakes **the way...**”—*the Christian way of life!* Looking to God the Father and Jesus Christ in sincerity and in Truth.

“...he who hates reproof shall die” (v 10). In other words, if a person is just absolutely adamant and will not be corrected, he will not achieve salvation and the Kingdom of God. He will die the second death!

Verse 31: “The ear that hearkens to the reproof of life shall remain among the wise.”

A benefit of accepting correction is that you become a wiser person! You become a person who makes better decisions and are basically able to direct your life in a more corrective fashion.

Proverbs 3:11: “My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor be weary of His correction; for whom the LORD loves He corrects, even as a father *corrects* the son *in whom* he delights. Blessed *is* the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gets understanding” (vs 11-13).

When we think about it, God’s Word has a lot to say about correction. We may not necessarily see that word pop up all the time, ***but what the Word of God teaches us is the way to achieve salvation and the Kingdom of God***, and to be able to be close

to God.

Obviously, this all means that we need to keep our 'eye on the road' and accept correction when we part from the road that we're on. In other words, it's full of correction for those who have an ear to hear. We have to hear before we can respond and do it. So, it's important to study the Scriptures knowing that the Word of God is full of information that we need to incorporate in our lives, so that we can truly repent of our sins and faults and become more righteous and Holy before Him.

Paul refers to this and explains it in greater detail in Heb. 12. This is a very important section regarding God's attitude toward correction. We can understand a great deal from the Scripture, and understand why it's so very important in our lives.

Hebrews 12:6: "For whom *the* Lord loves He chastens, and He severely disciplines every son whom He receives."

Why? *Because He loves us and He wants us to be in His Family!* He wants us to grant us eternal life so that we can be with Him for all eternity. Therefore, He looks upon chastening and correcting us as a very part of how He works with us.

Verse 7: "If you endure chastening, God is dealing with you as a *Father* with *His* sons...."

We are begotten of God's Spirit and we are the children of God.

"...For who is the son whom *the* Father does not chasten? But if you are without chastisement, of which all are partakers, then you are bastards and not sons. Furthermore, we have had our fleshly fathers who chastened *us*, and we respected *them*; should we not all the more *willingly* be subject to the Father of spirits, and live *forever*?" (vs 7-9).

Quite a profound statement! Yes, we did grow up in our family, and our fathers and mothers did give us correction and discipline when we needed it. Again, that is so valuable and important, because in the physical life a person who get proper correction from their parents is going to grow up having a better attitude toward adjusting and correcting his own life.

The way that you raise up a child in the way that he will go, when he is old he will not depart from it (Prov.22). That principle is very, very important to being raised in a home where proper discipline and correction is being applied to children, with love and with encouragement at the same time.

Verse 10: "For in the first case... [our human fathers] ...they chastened *us* for a few days in whatever way seemed good to them; but in the

second case... [with God] ...**He chastens us... [corrects us] ...for our own benefit that we may be partakers of His Holiness**"—*righteousness!*

Verse 11: "Now truly, no chastisement for the present seems to be joyous... [correction can be painful and difficult] ...but grievous; nevertheless, **afterwards it yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who have been exercised by it.**"

God the Father has called each of us so that **He**—through His Holy Spirit and through the Word of God—**can transform our lives!** So that we can take on the mind and character of Jesus Christ in the way that we conduct our lives.

This conversion process requires that we have a submissive, teachable contrite attitude willing to repent and accept correction of our sinful thoughts and ways. ***That has to be part of our being! We have to be ready to accept correction!***

The conversion process requires that we have a submissive, contrite and teachable heart that is willing to accept correction so that we might repent of our sins—*pure and simple!* The end result will be that we become more like Christ and God the Father. So, it's clear why this message is important to all of us.

Ephesians 4:11: "And He gave some as apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying of the Body of Christ **until we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man...**" (vs 11-13).

So, we see the purpose of the ministry is to lead and guide us, and even correct us, so that we can be made into a perfect person.

"...unto *the* measure of *the* stature of the fullness of Christ; so that we no longer be children, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men in *cunning* craftiness, with a view to the systematizing of the error; but holding the Truth in love, may in all things grow up into Him Who is the Head, *even* Christ" (vs 13-15).

This Scripture is very clear why correction should be very important in our lives. It requires that we take correction seriously and put into practice the changes that are needed.

During the Millennial rule of Christ is when we are resurrected and are in the Kingdom. We will be correcting and guiding those in the Millennium to chose the right way, to walk and conduct their lives so as to achieve salvation.

Isaiah 30:20_[transcriber's correction]: "And though

the LORD gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet, your teachers shall not be removed into a corner anymore, but your eyes shall see your teachers. And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This *is* the way, walk in it,’ when you turn to the right hand and when you turn to the left” (vs 20-21).

It’s clear to all of us that we need correction, because obviously we’re still in the flesh and we live in the world where Satan the devil and our carnal nature can cause us to err and sin, and go contrary to the way of God, because of our selfish desires.

Human nature hates to be corrected! Why? *Because a person thinks of himself as being right in his own eyes!*

Proverbs 14:12: “There is a way, which seems right to a man, but the end thereof *is* the way of death.”

Jeremiah 17:5: “Thus says the LORD, ‘Cursed *is* the man who trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart departs from the LORD.’”

Verse 9: “The heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?”

It’s for these reasons that we must truly seek God’s correction and help, because in that process we will be able to make better choices ***and live our lives more in harmony with His way of life!***

Jeremiah 10:23: “O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself; *it is* not in man who walks to direct his steps. *The natural man is not conducive to being corrected!*”

Verse 24 “O LORD, correct me... [notice the admonition to cry out to God to correct us] ...but with judgment; not in Your anger, lest You bring me to nothing.”

There’s one area that I would like to touch upon as far as accepting correction, and that is in the area of offenses.

Matt. 18:15-17 discusses a lot about offenses and how we must deal with them in the Church. Offenses will come, and we will occasionally—though it is rare—offend a brother or sister in the Church.

- What happens if someone approaches you and says that you have offended them in some way?
- How do you respond?
- How do you go forward?

First of all, we should pause and take a deep breath and consider the situation very seriously and

ask the person for clarification. Then ask yourself if the correction is valid and correct. Then we need to put aside pride and vanity and apologize and accept the correction and repent. So, you can see here that this is something that is a good example and need to exercise in accepting correction correctly.

In this situation it takes both parties to bring about the reconciliation and peace that God desires. So, both parties must truly be actively involved along with the Holy Spirit.

1. to accept correction and repent
2. to accept and give forgiveness

All of that works together!

We must always be seeking correction through prayer, and in our prayer life we should be asking God to correct us and help us to see those things that we need to change, so that we can produce more fruits of His Holy Spirit. If we deny that, we can really stunt our Christian growth!

For those who are staunch in not receiving correction, it truly may be a situation that will not all to be in the Kingdom. Correction is a key to growth and overcoming.

John 15:1: “I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. He takes away every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit; but He cleanses each one that bears fruit, in order that it may bear more fruit” (vs 1-2).

Verse 5: “I am the vine, *and you are* the branches. The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; because apart from Me you can do nothing.”

Pruning in the vineyard is a key process for producing an abundant crop. If you don’t prune back your vines, you will not get a very good crop. Pruning is analogous to God correcting us, cleansing us of our sinful and wrong ways so that we can grow and produce abundant fruit. Those fruits are listed in Gal. 5. we know what these fruits are.

- agape love
- joy
- peace
- faithfulness
- kindness
- goodness
- patience
- meekness
- self-control

All of these are fruits that we can develop more productively if we truly are willing to correct our ways.

Now I would like to go over some barriers.

What are some of the obstacles that people might face when accepting correction.

1) A hardened spirit that refuses to receive correction

This was true for the children of Israel, who resisted God and refused to be corrected of their evil ways or the prophets that God sent them, because of the hardness of their hearts.

Jeremiah 5:3: “O LORD, *are* not Your eyes on the Truth? You have stricken them, but they have not grieved; You have destroyed them, **but they have refused to receive correction**; they have made their faces harder than rock; they have refused to return. Therefore, I said, ‘Surely these *are* poor; they are foolish; for they do not know the way of the LORD, *nor* the judgment of their God’” (vs 3-4).

2) Pride and self-righteousness

These are both big barriers to receiving correction. We can see this in the life of Job. We can also see this in the attitude of the Pharisees (Luke 18).

A self-righteous person who is full of pride is convinced that any correction applies to someone else and not to them. They see themselves already perfected almost.

Luke 18:9: “And to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others... [speaking of the Pharisees] ...He also spoke this parable: ‘Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one *was* a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed with himself in this manner: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unrighteous, adulterers—or even as this tax collector. I fast twice in the week, *and* I give a tithe of everything that I gain.’ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat himself on *the* chest, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner.’... [he recognized his true state] ...I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For **everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled; and the one who humbles himself... [and receives correction] ...shall be exalted**’” (vs 9-14).

3) Blames others for their mistakes

‘It’s not my fault, it’s someone else’s fault.’

Adam and Eve are prime examples of this, for they tried to ‘pass the buck’ on their responsibility of taking of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Genesis 3:11: “And He said, ‘Who told you

that you *were* naked? Have you eaten of the tree, which I commanded you that you should not eat?’”

Rather than ‘coughing up’ and saying, ‘Yes, we’re guilty.’

Verse 12: “And the man said, ‘The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.’ And the LORD God said to the woman, ‘What *is* this you have done?’ And the woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate’” (vs 12-13).

So, pointing the finger at somebody else is one way to deflect responsibility, but also remember, when you point the finger, there are three fingers pointing back at yourself!

4) Spiritual blindness

A good example of this is with the Laodiceans and their poor spiritual condition.

Revelation 3:15: “I know your works that you are neither cold nor hot; I would *that* you be *either* cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and *are* neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth. For you say, ‘I am rich... [physically perhaps **but not spiritually**] ...and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’; and **you do not understand that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind**... [to their own spiritual condition] ...and naked” (vs 15-17).

5) Failure to know right doctrine and the Truth of God

If a person does not know the Scriptures, he may fail to accept correction because he doesn’t think it lines up with the Word of God. Therefore, it can prevent him from taking corrective action.

The answer is to *know* the Word of God and know where to go to find the correction and be able to apply it to yourself.

2-Timothy 2:15: “Diligently *study* to show yourself approved unto God, a workman who does not *need to be* ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of the Truth.”

One of the duties of the ministry is to correct the brethren in love when needed.

2-Timothy 4:2^[transcriber’s correction] : “Preach the Word! Be urgent in season and out of season; convict, rebuke...”—*correct!*

When someone comes in and starts introducing false doctrine, or conducting themselves in a way that is affecting the brethren, the ministry needs to properly take care of that.

“... encourage, with all patience and

doctrine. For there shall come a time when they will not tolerate sound doctrine; but according to their own lusts they shall accumulate to themselves *a great number of teachers, having ears itching to hear what satisfies their cravings*" (vs 2-3). ***Not the Truth of God, but satisfies themselves!***

Verse 4: "And they shall turn away their own ears from the Truth; and they shall be turned aside unto myths."

This is a major warning that Paul gave to the people at that time, because they were beginning to fall away and accept false doctrine.

How does Christ correct His Church today? We're going to see that through Christ's correction of the Church, He will bring back to obedience those who are going astray. When we sin and have unrighteous conduct, He uses His inspire Word, and He uses His Holy Spirit in combination to bring us back to the Truth and bring us to repentance, and therefore, correcting us.

In our journey to the Kingdom of God, God's Word is like a roadmap. It's got the road on how to get from point 'A' to point 'B,' so it's like a roadmap.

- it reveals righteousness from sin
- it reveals Truth from error
- it reveals right from wrong

His Holy Spirit is like a compass. A real compass point north and gives you correct direction, and likewise the Holy Spirit leads us in the correct direction to make changes when we're off course.

Romans 8:13: "Because **if** you are living according to *the flesh*, you shall die..." *If you don't receive correction it's the way of death!*

"...but **if** by *the Spirit* you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live. For as many as are led by *the Spirit of God*, these are *the sons of God*" (vs 13-14).

We see here that the Holy Spirit does not drag, beat upon us or drive us. ***It leads! It shows us the way that we need to follow!***

John 16:13^[transcriber's correction]: "However, when that one has come... [the Holy Spirit] ...*even the Spirit of the Truth, it will lead you into all Truth*, because it shall not speak from itself, but whatever it shall hear, it shall speak. And it shall disclose to you the things to come."

We know that the Holy Spirit gives us the very foundation so that we can understand, and to believe God and know God (1-Cor. 2). It's very important that through the Holy Spirit that we truly understand the things of God.

Indeed, the Holy Spirit ***leads us*** to repent and convicts of us sin. When we sin and do something wrong, the Holy Spirit will draw us back and will convict us of our actions. That's why it's important to see that.

Also, the Holy Spirit gives us inspiration, power and strength to accept correction and to go forth and choose the right way.

2-Timothy 1:6: "For this reason, I admonish you to stir up the gift of God that is in you by the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, **but of power, and of love, and of sound-mindedness**" (vs 6-7).

Here we can see that the Holy Spirit is one of the key factors that leads us to accept correction.

2-Timothy 3:15: "And that from a child you have known the Holy Writings, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus. All Scripture *is* God-breathed... [inspired] ...and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, **for correction, for instruction in righteousness** so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work" (vs 15-17).

Here we see correction is a key aspect. When we study God's Word and grow in spiritual understanding and Godly wisdom, we are able to apply it more effectively. As we do this, we will be correcting ourselves and be in harmony with God's way of life. So, focusing on ***correcting ourselves with through the Word of God and the Holy Spirit***, this is the best form of correction.

Hebrews 5:13: "For everyone who is partaking of milk *is* unskilled in *the Word of Righteousness* because he is an infant."

We do know that a small baby needs milk in which to grow on; but it's not the kind of food that it pertinent to spiritual growth.

Verse 14: "But solid food is for those who are fully grown, who through repeated practice have had their senses trained to discern between good and evil."

So, through practicing righteousness and Truth, one can truly discern more and more between good and evil, and therefore, live a life of correction.

We're corrected when we're cleansed by the washing of Word of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 5:25^[transcriber's correction]: "Husbands, love your own wives, in the same way that Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; so that He might sanctify it... [His Body, the Church] ...having cleansed *it* with the washing of the water

by *the* Word that He might present it to Himself as the glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be Holy and without blame” (vs 25-27).

I’m teaching from the Scriptures so that we can draw from the Word of God the very things that He wants us to learn and grow into. The key thing is that we need to be willing from the heart to humble ourselves and admit our faults and sins, and properly respond to God’s Word and His Holy Spirit. So, we can choose to repent and correct ourselves.

A good example of a person accepting correction and repenting is seen in the life of David, who was a man after God’s own heart. But there was a time when David sinned grievously. That was the time that he ordered the death of the Uriah the Hittite after David committed adultery with Uriah’s wife Bathsheba.

Nathan the prophet came to David and accused him of his sins. David quickly acknowledge his guilt and he repented (2-Sam. 12).

Nathan came to David and gave him a story about a man who had a small lamb that he loved very dearly. But apparently he worked for another person and that person took that small lamb and took it for meat. The example was horrific, an example of selfishness. So, David said that that man should die, because he recognized that it was a very simple thing to do.

Nathan, said, ‘You are that man!’ David realized and recognize it, because he had killed Uriah the Hittite. David took Bathsheba in adultery and he sinned grievously.

David said, ‘I have sinned greatly against the Lord.’ Nathan said to David, ‘The Lord has also put away your sins so you shall not die.’ But we do know that the penalty of that sin was on the household of David the rest of his life. That his enemies would be of his own household.

David humbly repented of His sins, and we can read of his humility and his repentance (Psa. 51). I recommend that you read the entire Psalm because it really strikes home the attitude of accepting correction so that we might repent.

Psalm 51:1: “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your loving kindness; according to the greatness of Your compassion, blot out my transgressions.” *David is appealing to God’s graciousness and mercy!*

Verse 2: “Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin, for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned,

and done evil in Your sight, that You might be justified when You speak and be in the right when You judge” (vs 2-4).

Verse 10: “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and let *Your* free spirit uphold me” (vs 10-12).

This is a very important Psalm to read and understand, because it shows a willingness of David to seek not only to repent of his sins, but to seek correction. That’s something that we need to make a part of our Christian grown, that we truly seek God’s correction:

- through prayer
- through study of His Word
- through meditation
- through occasional fasting

so that we might draw closer to God, so that we might be open and recognize the need for where we need to be corrected!

David talks about the fact that it’s important for us to be on guard and to recognize that we need correction.

Psalm 19:7: “The Law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.”

Accepting correction makes a person wiser, so this fits into this very well.

Verse 11: “Moreover, by them Your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward. Who can understand his errors? Oh, cleanse me from *my* secret faults; and keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; do not let them rule over me; then I shall be blameless, and I shall be innocent of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer” (vs 11-14).

Very clearly, self-correction through deep meditation and study of the Word through prayer and fasting, is the best form of correction. We can be corrected in other ways if we do not be easily corrected. Then God will have to use other ways to bring to our attention the need to be corrected.

It may be said that the degree of our conversion may be determined by how well we accept and respond to God’s correction.

One of the important keys to accepting proper correction is *humility!* Pride is a barrier and humility is the cure. As God’s people we need to

have a submissive, meek and humble spirit. So that we're not puffed up with vanity and pride, but one who is humble and ready, ready to be corrected when we are wrong.

Isaiah 66:2^[transcriber's correction]: "...But to this one I will look, to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word."

A person who trembles at the Word of God means he takes it seriously, is intent on reading and studying will be quick to see their faults and their need to accept Godly correction.

Christ reveals that humility will be the central characteristic of one who will be in God's Family in the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 18:1^[transcriber's correction]: "At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, 'Who then is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?' And after calling a little child to *Him*, Jesus set him in their midst, and said, 'Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, there is no way that you shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, whoever shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven'" (vs 1-4).

Why did Christ use this analogy of a little child for humility? *Because a little child will be very quick to receive correction from their parents and to accept correction!* They know they need it and want to be loved by their parents so they will receive correction in a humble way.

This is the same attitude that we as Christians need to have, a humble spirit and look to God.

James 4:6: "But He gives greater grace. This is the reason it says, 'God sets Himself against the proud, **but He gives grace to the humble.**' Therefore, submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, you sinners, and purify *your* hearts, you double-minded! Be grieved and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into grieving, and *your* joy into mourning. **Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you**" (vs 6-10).

When we have a humble spirit and draw close to God, this closes the gate for Satan to be able to tempt us. He has lost his power because we have drawn close to God and have a very humble spirit before Him.

When we can get rid of pride through embracing humility, then we can more readily accept correction with a right attitude, and realizing that it's for our good and not for our hurt.

Let's realize, brethren, when we receive deserved correction from God—or from any other source—it is for our benefit and our good so that we can:

- grow in understanding
- grow in Truth and righteousness
- grow in the Truth of God
- grow in the very nature of God

Finally, I would like to emphasize value or the benefits of correction. ***Proper correction is given so that we can gain benefits and be able to grow and overcome!*** That is so very, very important to remember!

In Rev. 2 & 3 we read about the seven Churches of God, and five were rebuked and corrected very strongly by Jesus Christ. He reported that unless they repent they shall be potentially losing out in reaching the Kingdom of God.

Revelation 3:17^[transcriber's correction]: "For you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'; and you do not understand that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. I counsel you to buy from Me gold purified by fire so that you may be rich... [the riches of God] ...and white garments so that you may be clothed, and the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and to anoint your eyes with eye salve, so that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke... [correct] ...and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent" (vs 17-19). *And the benefit of this is:*

Verse 20: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me. To the one who overcomes... [which is preceded by correction and repentance] ...will I give *authority* to sit with Me in My Throne, even as I also overcame, and sat down with My Father in His Throne" (vs 20-21).

God always gives encouragement when He gives correction, and He's there to help us understand the value of correction.

Read through the sections of Rev. 2 & 3 and you will find other examples of benefits for receiving God's correction and be received into the very Family of God.

I just want to emphasize that this has been a more serious sermon, but one that I felt is important for us to hear and to recognize the need to be able to accept correction properly; realizing the benefits that we shall receive in the end that will give us greater conversion with life eternal in the God's Kingdom.

God is working daily in our lives; He's there protecting, guiding, directing and even correcting us.

We must be willing to accept that correction and repent of our sins, so that we can be found righteous and Holy before Him!

Let us be watchful in our spiritual condition and also be aware of the need for correction, so that we shall be found ready at the return of our Savior Jesus Christ the King of kings.

Luke 21:34: **“Watch yourselves**, lest your hearts be preoccupied with high living and drinking and *the* cares of *this* life, and that day come upon you suddenly. For as a snare it shall come upon all those who dwell on the face of the earth. **Watch, therefore, and pray at all times that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man”** (vs 34-36).

May God continue to protect and watch over you!

- Proverbs 22
- Matthew 18:15-17
- Galatians 5
- 1 Corinthians 2
- 2 Samuel 12
- Revelation 2

RK:bo
Transcribed: 8-16-21

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Scriptural References:

- 1) Psalm 141:5
- 2) Proverbs 9:8-9
- 3) Proverbs 1:29-33
- 4) Proverbs 10:17
- 5) Proverbs 12:1
- 6) Proverbs 15:10, 31
- 7) Proverbs 3:11-13
- 8) Hebrews 12:6-11
- 9) Ephesians 4:11-15
- 10) Isaiah 30: 20-21
- 11) Proverbs 14:12
- 12) Jeremiah 17:5, 9
- 13) Jeremiah 10:23-24
- 14) John 15:1-2, 5
- 15) Jeremiah 5:3-4
- 16) Luke 18:9-14
- 17) Genesis 3:11-13
- 18) Revelation 3:15-17
- 19) 2 Timothy 2:15
- 20) 2 Timothy 4:2-4
- 21) Romans 8:13-14
- 22) John 16:13
- 23) 2 Timothy 1:6-7
- 24) 2 Timothy 3:15-17
- 25) Hebrews 5:13-14
- 26) Ephesians 5:25-27
- 27) Psalm 51:1-4, 10-12
- 28) Psalm 19:7, 11-14
- 29) Isaiah 66:2
- 30) Matthew 18:1-4
- 31) James 4:6-10
- 32) Revelation 3:17-21
- 33) Luke 21:34-36

Scriptures referenced, not quoted: