

“God’s Plan A”
Hebrews 12:1-11
Tuesday Bible Lunch
May 15, 2018

Introduction: Hebrews 12:1-11 is one of the most encouraging sections in the New Testament. The writer had just written about the great men and women of faith in Hebrews 11. In Hebrews 12, the writer then encouraged his readers to follow their example.

- The motivation for running “the race” is the example of the faith of those listed in Hebrews 11.
- In Hebrews 12:1, the readers who were Hebrews who had professed Christ, but still holding onto the Levitical system with all its legalism to put this “weight” off.
- In Hebrews 12:5-6 the writer to the Hebrews expounds on Proverbs 3:11-12.
- The word “chastening” conveys the idea of disciplining and instruction.
- The Greek word *paideia* was used to educate or instruct a child.

Text: Hebrews 12:5-8

T.S. There are three kinds of chastening or disciplining and none of them is joyful (12:11).

- Internal chastening
- External chastening
- Terminal chastening

1. Internal chastening is God’s plan A.

- Internal chastening is when God’s word disciplines and teaches you.
- The Bible says that God’s word is sharper than any two-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12).
- God’s word is God’s plan A.

Application: But God's plan A does not always work. We read about forgiveness, anger, loving your enemy, pride, gossip, and judgmental attitudes and it does not seem to faze us.

T.S. Then there is God's plan B.

2. External chastening is God's plan B.

- When God's plan A does not teach us, God has plan B.
- God resorts to other ways to get our attention.

Illustration: God uses people, problems, and other things to get our attention.

- God used a big fish to get Jonah's attention. After three days in the belly of a big fish, the Bible tells us that Jonah prayed (Jonah 2:1).

Application: God is sovereign, therefore, He either sends or allows whatever comes our way to discipline us. God's chastening is not joyful (12:11). But it assures us that we are a child of God and reminds us that He loves us. In the end, we are better for it.

Conclusion: Thank God for the "faith people" in your life who have encouraged you to be faithful. Be the kind of "faith person" that encourages others to be faithful.