

Understanding the Foundations

Chapter 9 - Judge Not?

Every time I begin a chapter, I feel like, “*This one will be much easier to write than the last one.*” Yet, once I get into it, that confidence quickly vanishes. Soon I am totally stuck, praying for the Father to give me wisdom and to say what He wants to say. And that is exactly the way it should be any time we presume to teach. As I was praying for guidance on this chapter, the Father brought to mind this carving which I made a few years ago.

**He has showed you,
O man, what is good.
And what does the LORD
require of you?
To act justly,
and to love mercy,
and to walk humbly
with your God?**
Micah 6:8 (NIV)



Figure 1 Walk Humbly Carving

I often carve what God is teaching me and, at that time, I was struggling with comparisons. In my eyes, other people seemed to be “doing great things for God” but my accomplishments seemed so insignificant. How could God be pleased with me? That is a dark place to walk through, but the Holy Spirit drew me back into the light with this verse. Notice that there is nothing at all in this verse about accomplishment. It is only about our relationship with Him and how we live it out with other people.

I was “judging” myself against a standard other than what God uses. So it is fitting that He would bring that time to my remembrance, as I approach the subject of “judging.” We must deal with this topic in deep humility to be able to present the true balance between Justice and Mercy. But... is it really a “balance?” Could it be that Justice and Mercy are not opposites but rather two aspects of the very same thing? Yes, they are...

The Most Popular Scripture Today

It is no secret that sin is rampant in our churches today. During the past 40+ years that I have been watching, not only has sin “come out of the closet” in our churches, but now it also swaggers around proudly. The most popular verse in the Bible used to be, *“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life,”* John 3:16 (ESV) but that has now been replaced by:

“Judge not, that you be not judged.”

Matthew 7:1 (ESV)

Whenever sin is mentioned, someone is sure to throw that verse out to stop the conversation. If they know a little more scripture, they may add:

*“... you have no excuse... you who judges...
in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself!”*

Romans 2:1 (ESV)

*...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
and are justified by His grace as a gift...*

Romans 3:23-24 (ESV)

In essence, they are saying, ***“Yes, of course I am sinning... EVERYBODY sins. How dare you say anything about it! It doesn’t matter because grace covers it!”***

So, what did Jesus mean by “Judge Not.” As always, let’s look at it in context.

¹ ***“Judge not, that you be not judged.*** ² *For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you.* ³ *Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?* ⁴ *Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye?* ⁵ *You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.* Matthew 7:1-5 (ESV)

By itself, verse 1 seems to say that we should never “judge” anyone. Then, if you read verse 2 as a separate sentence, it looks like a threat that if we judge anyone, we will be judged. Verses 3 & 4 seem to continue the whipping saying that, since we are all sinners, we cannot correct the sins of others. However, verse 5 simply doesn’t fit this understanding. What does it mean by, ***“first take the log out of your own eye”***?

So, Let's Start Over

Remember that there is no punctuation in Biblical Greek. That is added by the translators to try to make sense of the text. Just a few verses down, Jesus tells us that we must “judge.” [Matthew 7:15-20 & Matthew 18:15] Therefore, verse 1 cannot be a commandment that we must never judge. If you remove the period and read verses 1 and 2 together, it becomes a warning that, if we can't judge rightly, then we must not judge others. *“Judge not, that you be not judged for with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you.”* As Jesus said in John 7:24, **“Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.”**

Verses 3 & 4 are then clearly a warning against hypocritically judging someone for their sin while we ourselves are wallowing in sin. *“Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye?”*

So, does it still say that we should just look the other way and ignore the sin our brother is walking in? Not at all! Verse 5 provides the answer.

“You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.” Matthew 7:1-5 (ESV)

Jesus is saying that we have a responsibility to walk in righteousness so we can help other people to walk in righteousness.

Sin is a Choice

Contrary to modern preaching, we are not helpless victims of life who can't control their own actions. Consider what Paul says about it.

⁵ **Put to death** therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. ⁶ On account of these the wrath of God is coming. ⁷ In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. ⁸ But now you must **put them all away**: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have **put off the old self** with its practices ¹⁰ and have **put on the new self**, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator... Colossians 3:5-17 (ESV)

Notice he doesn't say that we should pray that the Lord would remove such sin from us. We willfully choose to either walk in sin or to walk in obedience to God.

*Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. **Do not present your members to sin** as instruments **for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God** as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments **for righteousness.*** Romans 6:12-13 (ESV)

Even though Paul uses the term, “slaves to sin,” he makes it clear that we choose whose slave we will be. Choosing to be a “slave to sin,” by disregarding God’s Law, leads to death. In contrast, when we choose to be “slaves of God” by following His Laws, we walk in His presence which gives eternal life.

¹⁹ *...For just as **you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness** leading to more lawlessness, **so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.*** ²⁰ *For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.* ²¹ *But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For **the end of those things is death.*** ²² *But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, **the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.*** ²³ *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Romans 6:19-23 (ESV)

The deception that people live under today is that they are neither “slaves to sin” nor “slaves to God.” Instead, they believe the serpent’s lie, “*You shall be as gods*” [Genesis 3:5 / Chapter 8 of this book] so they can choose their own way.

In the past decade, as sin has gone mainstream, even mentioning that certain things are sin can be labeled a “hate-crime” which may be punishable by fines and prison. Therefore, few pulpits even talk about sin anymore. Instead, they focus on “the love of God” and “achieving your full potential.” As a result, the wildfires of sin grow ever larger and consume countless lives.

Fighting the Flames or Fighting the Fire?



Figure 2 Fighting Fires

When fighting fires, some people panic because of the roaring flames. They spray the fire extinguisher at the flames which does nothing. To put out the fire, you must aim the extinguisher at the source of the flame.

Likewise, when we look at sin, what we are usually seeing are the “flames” which are the many ways

that sin manifests in our lives. It is useless to try to extinguish these flames. We must understand what sin really is and aim the extinguisher at its source.

What is the Source of Sin?

¹² How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! ¹³ You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; ¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’

Isaiah 14:12-14 (ESV)

This passage is from a taunt to be raised against the king of Babylon. [\[Isaiah 14:3\]](#) Like the parallel passage concerning the King of Tyre in Ezekiel 28, this passage seems to describe more than just an earthly king. Indeed, the King James Version translates “O Day Star” as “Lucifer” which is simply Latin for “light bearer.” Regardless of the translation, this was certainly the attitude of both the earthly king Nebuchadnezzar and of Satan.

Whether we like to admit it or not, this is the driving force behind sin. We may not see it in such grand terms, but the attitude is the same. **“I should have whatever I want, the way I want it and when I want it.”** As the serpent told Adam and Eve, **“...you shall be as gods...”** Whether this attitude manifests itself in immorality, greed, abuse, lying, envy or claiming honor that is only due to God, these “flames” of sin come from a heart that is burning with iniquity.

How do you put out a fire like that?

To fight a fire, you must use the right kind of extinguisher. Water can extinguish burning wood and paper but it doesn't work on burning oil. If you use it on electrical fires you may be electrocuted and if you use it on burning metals they will explode. You can't fight the fire of sin with rules. The Pharisees and Sadducees of Jesus' time were regarded as very religious men and they followed more rules than you could count – yet their hearts were filled with hypocrisy and murder.

In reality, we cannot fight the fire of sin in someone else's heart. Only the conviction of the Holy Spirit can do that. Nevertheless, we do have a major part to play in it. Let's look again at verse 5.

“You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.” Matthew 7:5 (ESV)

If I am living as a hypocrite, preaching morality while I myself am living in sin, I am trying to put out a fire by spraying gasoline on it. Jesus says, that I must first deal with the sin in *my* life. I must throw it down as the filthy thing that it is and kick it out the door of my life. THEN – I will be able to help someone else with their sin. How do I help them? By *demonstrating* that we are *NOT* gods. By *demonstrating* that Jesus alone is the Lord of my life. And by *demonstrating* that true freedom and joy come from submitting to Him and walking in His ways.

Justice and Mercy

I suggested earlier that Justice and Mercy were not opposites but rather two aspects of the very same thing. How can that be? We see Justice and Mercy as opposites because our understanding of them is distorted. When someone hurts or offends me, I want “justice!” But, if I do something wrong, I want “mercy.” The prophet Zechariah said it this way.

⁹ *"This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another.' ¹⁰ Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. In your hearts do not think evil of each other.'*

Zechariah 7:9-10 (NIV)

Weightier Matters

*“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected **the weightier matters of the Law: justice and mercy and faithfulness.** These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.*
Matthew 23:23 (ESV)

Most people would say that the goal of the Law would be justice and punishment of wrong doing. But notice that Jesus echoes Zechariah’s words by saying that justice **and mercy** are “weightier matters of the Law.”

Yes, the purpose of the Law is to provide a righteous standard to judge by. However, the **goal** of the Law is not to condemn and put to death but rather to give life and restore fellowship between God and man. If God were the Ogre that people make Him out to be, He would have destroyed Israel a thousand times for their constant rebellion and sin. But listen to the cry of His heart:

³⁰ *“Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, declares the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin.”* ³¹ *Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel?* ³² *For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord GOD; so turn, and live.”* Ezekiel 18:30-32 (ESV)

Like Paul, God is saying that obedience is our choice. Modern preaching says that it is impossible to obey God’s Laws but Moses said, *“what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach.”* Deuteronomy 30:11 (NIV)
We use the lame excuse, *“Under the Law, if you even sin once you are damned. Since we cannot keep the Law perfectly, there is no point even trying. We must live by grace.”* Grace? Is that not exactly what God is offering Israel in this passage?! The whole point of the book of Ezekiel is that the nation of Israel had flagrantly rebelled against God and were facing severe judgement for their sin. Even so... yet one more time... He pleads with them to repent so He can give them grace.

In our distorted view of Justice and Mercy, we no longer understand that Mercy/Grace is God’s response to repentance. Repentance is our response to accepting His judgement that we have sinned. Therefore, it is an act of love when we show someone their error because, where there is no repentance there will be no mercy or grace.

My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins. James 5:19-20 (ESV)

It is a gross insult to God's grace to use it as an excuse to live in sin. As Paul said, *What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?* Romans 6:1-2 (ESV)

By this we know that we know

¹ *My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*
² *He is the propitiation [atoning sacrifice] for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.* ³ *And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His Commandments.* ⁴ ***Whoever says "I know Him" but does not keep His Commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him,*** ⁵ *but whoever keeps His word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in Him:* ⁶ *whoever says he abides in Him ought to walk in the same way in which He walked.* 1 John 2:1-6 (ESV)

Over the years, I have heard the first verse preached many times. Sometimes it is combined with the second verse to suggest some kind of universal salvation. Verses 5 and 6 make a nice closing because, out of context, "*keeps His word*" and "*abides in Him*" have a pleasant, soothing sound. However, I have never heard it preached in full context, allowing verses 3 and 4 to say what they obviously say.

For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. Hebrews 10:26-27 (ESV)

So yes, judging one another righteously is an act of love and not a hate-crime.

Wrongful Judging

We have seen that the goal of judgment – whether by God or by us – is salvation and restoration. However, there is a very wrong way to “judge” which is deeply offensive to Jesus. Consider His words just a few verses earlier.

²¹ *“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’* ²² *But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and **whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.*** ²³ *So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that*

your brother has something against you, ²⁴ *leave your gift there before the altar and go. **First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.***
Matthew 5:21-24 (ESV)

The word translated as ‘fool’ is “raca” which means ‘empty.’ This was a common insult in Jesus’ day and apparently one that He despised. Why was it so offensive to Him? ‘Empty’ means stupid and worthless. While it is true that those who reject God’s ways are acting foolishly in their rebellion, the Father did not consider them to be “worthless” when He sent His Son to die for them. To say that people – even the nasty ones – are “worthless” is to say that the sacrifice of Christ was “worthless.” Yes, if they reject His gift of salvation, they will perish.

Nevertheless, He continues to offer it to them until their final breath. And, by the way... we are all “nasty” when we choose to reject God’s ways. Some may look good when you compare their outward appearances to others but, as Jesus said,

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people’s bones and all uncleanness. So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.” Matthew 23:27-28 (ESV)

There is only one standard of righteousness and when we reject God’s ways, our “righteousness” is disgusting to Him. Isaiah used the most extreme words that he could think of as he confesses the sins of his people and pleads on their behalf.

*“We are all as an unclean thing, and **all our righteousnesses are as “filthy rags...”*** [menstrual cloths] Isaiah 64:6 (KJV)

I have heard this verse preached many times to say that we should not strive to live according to God’s Laws. Then, every group invents their own pathetic definition of righteousness and judges others by their standards rather than God’s. But this verse has nothing to do with keeping God’s Laws as described in the Old Testament. A few verses down, Isaiah describes their so-called “righteousness.”

² ***I spread out My hands all the day to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices;*** ³ *a people who provoke me to my face continually, sacrificing in gardens and making offerings on bricks;* ⁴ *who sit in tombs, and spend the night in secret places; who eat pig’s flesh, and broth of tainted meat is in their vessels;* ⁵ ***who say, “Keep to Yourself, do not come near me, for I am too holy for You.”*** *These are a smoke in my nostrils, a fire that burns all the day.* Isaiah 65:2-5 (ESV)

Leave Your Gift

Going back for a moment to Matthew 5, another thing to notice is that Jesus warns us not to bring gifts to Him when our hearts are not right with others. He will not accept them.

*²³ So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar and go. **First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.***

Matthew 5:23-24 (ESV)

He says that we must first reconcile with the one that we have wronged and **THEN** He will accept our gifts and answer our prayers. This is not something new to the New Testament. Consider these strong words that God spoke to the men of Israel.

¹³ ... You cover the LORD's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. ¹⁴ But you say, "Why does He not?" Because the LORD was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. ¹⁵ Did He not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth.

Malachi 2:13-15 (ESV)

People say that marriage is "just a piece of paper." God disagrees. He says that marriage is a covenant that He ratified. If we are unfaithful in that covenant He will not accept our gifts or regard our prayers. Yes, God will give us Grace/Mercy when we repent of our sins. But how much better to live faithfully so that our lives leave a legacy of blessing rather than cursing to others. And, if someone sins intentionally saying in their heart, "I'll repent **after** I get what I want," I assure you that God will not be mocked. [Galatians 6:7-8 / Hebrews 10:26-27]

Blessing and Cursing

One reason that Jewish People are so disproportionately successful is that they understand – at least culturally – the power of blessing and cursing. How many times have you heard a frustrated parent rail at their child, "**You Stupid Idiot. You'll never amount to anything!**" They are shouting, **RACA!** at their children and pronouncing curses over them.

In contrast, a frustrated Jewish parent is more likely to rail at their child, **“Oy Vey! Yosef, how do you expect to become a doctor if you act so foolishly.”** While the child probably does not appreciate the correction at that time, [Hebrews 12:11] the parent is actually blessing them by affirming the child’s potential. Many Jewish parents also pray blessings over their children every night such as the Aaronic Blessing.

*The LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
the LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.*

*“So shall they put My name upon the people of Israel,
and I will bless them.”*

Numbers 6:24-27 (ESV)

You really have to try to fail when you have that kind of push to succeed!

Bless - For to this you were called...

*Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, **bless, for to this you were called**, that you may obtain a blessing.*

1 Peter 3:8-9 (ESV)

We are called to humbly walk in unity and love with one another. We are called to be a blessing to those around us... even those who treat us badly. Is that new in the New Testament? Not at all. Remember God’s promise to Abraham?

*I will make of you a great nation, and **I will bless you** and make your name great, so that **you will be a blessing**. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and **in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.**” Genesis 12:2-3 (ESV)*

We have all heard that “The Jews are God’s Chosen People.” Some Jews take this narcissistically not understanding that they were chosen – **to fulfill a mission**. However, those who do recognize this, see Abraham’s blessing as their mission statement, **“How can I, as a Jew, be a blessing to the world around me?”** As followers of Jesus, we are grafted into that same tree so the same spiritual ‘sap’ runs through us. [see Chapter 3 on Romans 11:1-36] This is also our heritage. Therefore, we too are called to actively seek ways to be pipelines of God’s blessing into our parched and dry world.

Shalom

Chapter 9 References

For your convenience, these are scriptures mentioned in this chapter but not shown in the main text.

Isaiah 14:3-7 (ESV)

³ When the LORD has given you rest from your pain and turmoil and the hard service with which you were made to serve, ⁴ **you will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon:** “How the oppressor has ceased, the insolent fury ceased! ⁵ The LORD has broken the staff of the wicked, the scepter of rulers, ⁶ that struck the peoples in wrath with unceasing blows, that ruled the nations in anger with unrelenting persecution. ⁷ The whole earth is at rest and quiet; they break forth into singing.

Ezekiel 28:11-19 (ESV)

¹¹ Moreover, the word of the LORD came to me: ¹² “Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord GOD: “You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. ¹³ **You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. ¹⁴ You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. ¹⁵ You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you. ¹⁶ In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence in your midst, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. ¹⁷ Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you. ¹⁸ By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries; so I brought fire out from your midst; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes on the earth in the sight of all who saw you. ¹⁹ All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever.”**

Matthew 7:15-20 (ESV)

¹⁵ “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ **You will recognize them by their fruits.** [See Galatians 5:19-25] Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

Romans 2:1-11 (ESV)

¹ **Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things.** ² We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. ³ Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? ⁴ **Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?** ⁵ But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for

yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. ⁶ He will render to each one according to his works: ⁷ to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; ⁸ but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. ⁹ There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, ¹⁰ but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. ¹¹ For God shows no partiality.

Romans 3:21-26 (NIV)

²¹ But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³ **for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace** through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. ²⁵ God presented Him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in His blood. He did this to demonstrate His justice, because in His forbearance He had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished – ²⁶ He did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the One who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

Galatians 5:19-25 (ESV)

¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. **I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.** ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

Galatians 6:7-8 (ESV)

⁷ Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. ⁸ For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

Hebrews 12:7-11 (NIV)

⁷ Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. **For what son is not disciplined by his father?** ⁸ If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. ⁹ Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! ¹⁰ Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in His holiness. ¹¹ **No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful.** Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.