

Love That Teaches

“Father” has grown to be the name for God that is most dear and meaningful to me. This personal name expresses intimacy and belonging. It reminds me of His deep love for me as His own son. And when I speak it to Him, the word says, “I love You and trust You and reverence You.”

But the scripture above adds a new side to this picture of God as my Father. It says that God disciplines all His children...including me.

I remember when my three children were teenagers. I came to realize that they would only grasp many truths through personal experience. I could talk and talk, but some lessons would never penetrate their shells. Like all of us, they would base their decisions on how they saw the world. Unfortunately, there is so much of the world they had not yet seen. But pain is a great teacher, and they would learn, just as we did.

I think of my own life. If I didn't experience all the tough times, how much would I really understand of God's tender, personal love for me? Would I realize that He cares about my finances, my car, my children, my job – everything I care about – and that He is willing to be involved in all those areas?

How often did I cry out in desperation, “Lord, You are able. Why don't You just take away these desires?” Yet without those shameful failures, would I have learned how totally, constantly I must depend on Him? Would I have tasted the depths of my own self-centeredness, the terrible bondage of sin, or the wonderful freedom of holiness?

Without the demands of family life, would we ever understand the demands of love, or its blessings?

He has spoken so many truths to us in the Bible, and He has called us to simply trust Him. But these truths often don't come alive for us until we experience life's discipline.

Remember, God is not a scowling disciplinarian, standing over us with a switch in His hand. Our Father is not like that. He is eager to teach us, eager to lift us and show us how deeply He cares. His heart is anxious to give us His very best, and not even the life of His only Son is too great a price to pay. Trust Him. Look to Him in everything, and let each situation teach You more about His love for you.

Hymn: [We Are Children](#)