

## GOD DISCIPLINES HIS PEOPLE

*“My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.”*

*Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. 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! 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. 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. (Heb. 12:5-11).*

**Turn to the inside back cover and read Phases 1-3. Pay special attention in Phase 3 to the reason God disciplines His people.**

God created and called out His people for a love relationship with Himself. When God’s people depart from that love relationship, He is grieved. He is brokenhearted over the broken love relationship. He disciplines His people and invites them to return to Him. The third phase in God’s pattern for revival is that He disciplines His people because of His love for them.

God created His people for a love relationship. He knows that fullness of life is found only in that relationship. Thus, when we move out of the relationship, God knows we are missing out on the life for which He created us. He doesn’t want His children living mediocre lives when they can experience His best. Because of His love God disciplines His children when they depart from Him and sin. He is calling us back to Himself and life’s best.

**In your own words write one reason God disciplines His children.**

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Human parents discipline their children when they do wrong. Have you ever said, “This is for your own good” or “This is going to hurt me more than it is you”? Parents who love their children teach them to live correctly.

God loved us so much that He sent His Son Jesus to die on a cross for us. Our sin brought great pain to our heavenly Father. He loves us dearly. That is why He rebukes, disciplines, and punishes His children. A person who is

not disciplined in not part of God's family. God's correction of His children is for their own good. God wants us to share in His holiness. He wants us to reap righteousness and peace. Even though His discipline may be painful, we should submit to His correction and live! The words from Hebrews 12 at the beginning of today's devotional are intended to "encourage" you. Be encouraged when you are disciplined by God. That is a good sign that He loves you and has not given up on you.

There is another reason God disciplines us. He loves the lost world and wants to see them repent. When God's people depart from Him, His redemptive mission slows down. God did not provide for a "Plan B" if the church failed to assume its place in His mission. Thus, God disciplines us so we will return to Him and so He can work mightily through us to redeem a lost world. He is not content for a lost world to die and go into eternity without the benefit of His Son's blood-bought forgiveness.

**In your own words write a second reason God disciplines His people.**

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God disciplines us to call us back to our assignment of carrying out the ministry of reconciliation. He wants a lost world to be redeemed. He wants us to return to our assigned mission of introducing the world to our Savior Jesus Christ. When we are experiencing God's power flowing through us to see the world around us change, we will experience the abundant life Jesus came to give. God loves us too much to leave us where we are and let us miss out on His best.

## SEEKING GOD FOR REVIVAL IN THE LAND



- Pray that God's discipline in your life will be clearly known. Ask Him to teach you in the coming days to identify the ways He disciplines so you will recognize it when it comes.
- Pray that your pastor and other spiritual leaders will be so sensitive to God's Spirit that they will identify God's discipline when it comes on a church, a city, or the nation. To claim that there is "peace, peace" when there is no peace can be costly or fatal. Believing "God had nothing to do with it" or "It's spiritual warfare" when God is trying to get our attention invites more intense discipline.

*God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness (Heb. 12:10).*

God's judgments (or disciplines) can be divided into two categories: eternal and temporal.

- **Eternal judgments** are rulings that separate God's people to heaven and all others to hell for eternity.
- **Temporal judgments** are correction and punishment that occurs in this life time.

Someday soon Jesus is going to return to claim His own people and take them to heaven for eternity. At the end of history God will judge all people. "we will all stand before God's judgment seat.... So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:10,12). The judgments in the end times will be eternal. Our destiny in heaven or hell will be settled as God separates the "sheep" (his people) from the "goats" (those who do not belong to Him) (See Matt. 25:31-46.). In this chapter we are NOT dealing with those eternal judgments, though our responses to God today will affect the outcome of those judgments.

Our primary focus right now is on God's temporal (or earthly) judgments—those that occur in this life time. These disciplines and judgments are intended to correct us or to punish us. Because God is loving and patient, His correction almost always comes first. Only after that fails to bring change does more severe punishment and the wrath of God come. God is sovereign, however. He can do what He pleases. His judgments, however, are always just, fair, and right. He will never give us greater punishment than we deserve.

Temporal discipline and judgment in this life are of two types:

- **Remedial judgment** is discipline or judgment intended to correct us and point us back to a right relationship with God.
- **Final judgment** is judgment or punishment which ends life or usefulness because of prolonged rebellion or severe sin.

Remedial judgments are intended by God to correct us or discipline us. They are to guide us back to a right relationship with God. "Final" judgments come when God displays His wrath. He sometimes destroys or removes life in punishment. When final judgment comes, no opportunity for repentance is left. Time for repentance is past. Final judgments usually come after prolonged periods of sin without repentance. Sometimes, however, God uses a final judgment because the nature of the sin is so great. He uses final judgments at other times because the sin could have great influence in others if He did not deal severely with the sin.

We see both types in 1 Corinthians 11:17-34. The Corinthians were partaking of the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner "without recognizing the body of the Lord" (1 Cor. 11:29). They had divisions in the church and showed little respect or concern for each other. Paul said: That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if

we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world (1 Cor. 11:30-32). The “weak and sick” represent remedial judgment. They could still repent. Those who had “fallen asleep” were dead—that’s a final judgment where the opportunity for repentance is past. Lets look at another example of each.

**Turn in your Bible to Acts 5:1-11 and read about Ananias and Sapphira.**

The church was young. The church in Jerusalem would be the “mother church” for all the churches that would come after it. God new that a wicked influence of deceit could corrupt the entire redemptive work He intended for the church. Because the sin of Ananias and Sapphira could have such a broad and lasting influence, God executed a righteous and final judgment on them. God is sovereign and can do what He chooses, for we all deserve death because of our sin. However, God more frequently uses remedial judgment to call His people to return.

**Turn in your Bible to 1 Corinthians 5:1-13 and read about the remedial discipline of the immoral man at Corinth.**

The immoral man at Corinth experienced corrective discipline of God recommended by Paul and carried out by the church. In 2 Corinthians 2:5-11 Paul explains that the correction was effective. Paul asked the church to forgive the man, comfort him, and reaffirm their love for him. The church’s correction by Paul also was effective. (See 2 Corinthians 7:8-13.)

In our study of revival our focus is on God’s remedial discipline or judgment. God’s desire is to correct us so that we will return to Him. The word *judgment* at the bottom of the diagram of God’s pattern is a final judgment in this lifetime. God’s desire for His people is that we will never reach that point. He wants us to repent and return to Him and usefulness for His kingdom.

## SEEKING GOD FOR REVIVAL IN THE LAND



- Have you ever experienced God’s remedial judgment—His corrective discipline? Thank God that He loves you enough to correct you. Ask the Lord to help you be responsive to His disciplines so you can hurry back to Him any time you drift away.
- Pray that God will give the gift of discernment to spiritual leaders so they will understand God’s disciplines and correctly interpret them to God’s people.

## TRUTH ABOUT GOD AND HIS JUDGMENTS

*He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9).*

Many of God's people have lost the sense of the reverent fear of God. We no longer believe that He disciplines and judges His people. Many think that the God of judgment and wrath was the God we see in the Old Testament. They think of God revealed in the New Testament as only a God of love and mercy. Such thinking shows that a person does not know the Scripture or the God revealed in Scripture.

God said, "I the LORD do not change" (Mal. 3:6). "Jesus Christ [God] is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Heb. 13:8). We do not serve two Gods—one Old Testament and one New Testament. The Lord is One. He doesn't change. Let's look together at some of the truths about the nature of our God.

- God is gracious, merciful, slow to anger, abundant in lovingkindness, and He relents from doing harm (See Jonah 4:2, Neh. 9:31, Jer. 9:24.).
- God is just when He speaks and blameless when He judges (See Ps. 51:4)
- God is love. He desires what is best for those He loves. He so loved the world that He sent His own Son to pay the price for the ultimate judgment on sin—death on the cross (See John 3:16; 1 John 4:7-8.).
- God's righteous judgments sometimes include His wrath (See Rom. 2:5.).
- He is full of compassion and forgives, often turning away His anger and wrath (See Ps. 78:38.).
- God "loves righteousness and justice" (Ps. 33:5).

God is beyond our understanding. Yet He has revealed Himself in Scripture. He is perfect love. He forever convinced us of His love through the death of Jesus on the cross. He is kind, compassionate, patient, and slow to anger. God is also just. He never punishes the innocent. His judgments are always right and fair. Yet, He also is merciful. He seldom gives us the punishment we deserve. He forgives us when we repent and return to Him.

But God also is holy and pure. He cannot and will not tolerate our sin. Because of His holiness and justice, He must deal with our sin. He does get angry at times, and he sometimes displays His wrath on rebellious people. We need to develop a healthy fear of our holy God. When you enter His presence, you will sense His holiness. You also will see clearly the sin in your own life. When a church experiences genuine worship in His presence, they will become aware of any sin for which they need forgiveness.

**Read the following Scriptures and see what God takes pleasure in:**

**Ezekiel 18:23**— “Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Sovereign LORD. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?”

**2 Peter 3:9**— “He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

Don't we tend to think that God would delight in the death of the wicked? God does not delight in the death of anyone who needs to repent. He wants all people to repent and turn to Him. Several other truths from Scripture are important to keep in mind as we study God's judgment.

- Judgment should begin with the people of God. “It is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God?” (1 Pet. 4:17).
- Every deed, including hidden things, will be judged. “God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil” (Eccl. 12:14).
- Jesus came to bring judgment. “Jesus said, ‘For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind’” (John 9:39).
- God's judgments always are right, true, and fair. “Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are your judgments” (Rev. 16:7).
- God's discipline is progressive. It increases each time we do not respond (See Lev. 26:14-33.). God is longsuffering and merciful in dealing with us. Yet, when the time comes that we refuse to repent, He will deal with His people. When He disciplines and judges us, He is right and justified in all that He does.

Abraham summed up the truth about God's judgments: “Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (Gen. 18:25). Yes, He will!

## SEEKING GOD FOR REVIVAL IN THE LAND



- Review the truths about God and His judgment that you've read today. Confess these truths about God. Praise Him for His righteousness, justice, truth, fairness, mercy, patience, and so forth.
- Praise God that He does not delight in the death of the wicked. Thank Him for His patience with our nation. Pray that He will work with us in such a way that we will repent and return to Him. Be encouraged that even a pagan city like Nineveh can repent! So can America.

## EXAMPLES OF THE WAYS GOD DISCIPLINES

God has given us His Word so we can come to know Him and better understand the ways He deals with us. The Scriptures are filled with examples of God's disciplines and judgments. Some are far more serious than others. As you read yesterday, His judgments are progressive. They get more severe the longer we refuse to respond. (See Deut. 28:15-68). Some of the examples of God's discipline and judgment in Scriptures include the following:

- Natural Disasters: such as earthquake, volcano, hurricane, tornado, flood, fire, drought, hail, famine, insect plague, and attack of wild animals.
- Disease: plague, wasting disease, fever, and leprosy.
- Human Conflict or Trouble: war, attack or defeat by an enemy, being taken into captivity or bondage, being ruled by those who hate, victim of crime, victim of immorality, bloodshed, increase in wickedness, broken human relationships, economic collapse.

When ever these things happen, God may be using them to discipline or judge a people. Sometimes when God judges nations seemingly innocent people are hurt as well. But the truth is none of us is truly innocent. We have all sinned. God's judgments are not always limited to the wicked when He touches a nation. For instance when God judged Judah during the times of Ezekiel the Lord said: "I am against you. I will draw my sword from its scabbard and cut off from you both the righteous and the wicked. Because I am going to cut off the righteous and the wicked, my sword will be unsheathed against everyone from south to north" (Ezek. 21:3).

God grieves to bring such a judgment, but at times He must. The "bad" things listed above like natural disasters, disease, human conflict or trouble do not necessarily imply God's judgment. But spiritual leaders would do well to guide the people to seek the Lord any time one occurs. If God is bringing discipline, the sooner we realize it, the sooner we can respond to the Lord and return to Him.

Historically these "bad" circumstances were seen as reasons to call an assembly of God's people for prayer. A murder or rape in town caused God's people to grieve over their failure to be salt and light in the community. A famine, plague, or natural disaster caused God's people to immediately stand before God to see if they were at fault through sin. War was also seen as a possible judgment from God. (See the proclamations on pp. 44-45 as examples.)

God uses a variety of ways to discipline people when they sin. He begins by bringing conviction of the sin. If people respond with a ready heart to repent, He does not have to discipline. But when He must follow through with discipline people may face one or more of the following:

1. God may refuse to hear their prayers. “Your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear” (Isa. 59:2).
2. God may withdraw the awareness of His presence. “How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?” (Ps. 13:1).
3. God may send a famine of hearing a word from the Lord. “‘The days are coming,’ declares the Sovereign LORD, ‘when I will send a famine through the land— not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of the LORD. Men will stagger from sea to sea and wander from north to east, searching for the word of the LORD, but they will not find it’” (Amos 8:11-12).
4. God may remove the hedge of protection from us and those we love. “‘Now I will tell you what I am going to do to my vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it will be destroyed; I will break down its wall, and it will be trampled’” (Isa. 5:5).
5. God may allow us to reap the full consequences of our own sinful behavior. God describes this late stage of judgment on sinful people in Romans 1:18-32.
6. Finally, God may destroy or remove. (See Rev. 2:5 for example).

God’s desire is that we would respond to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. When we don’t judge ourselves and repent, He judges us. His disciplines will increase until He gets our attention. The fourth phase in God’s pattern for revival is: “God’s people cry out to Him for help.” This is God’s purpose in discipline. He continues to increase the intensity of the discipline until we cry out to Him for help. Then He is able to get our attention and call us to repent from our sinful ways. If we do not repent or respond to God, He will eventually deal with our stubbornness through more severe actions. He does have a limit on His patience. If we continue to refuse to respond, He may bring final judgments. O, Lord, may we be attentive to your disciplines and repent!

## SEEKING GOD FOR REVIVAL IN THE LAND



- Pray for God to give you a sensitive spirit to know His voice and a responsive heart to turn back to Him at the slightest correction.
- Pray that God will reveal to you and your church anything that He is currently doing that is an act of discipline. Ask Him to give you clarity to distinguish between discipline and spiritual warfare. They may be similar. But if God is bringing discipline, He will reveal the reason if you ask Him.



## REVIVAL UNDER JOSIAH AND HILKIAH

*“Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before God when you heard what he spoke against this place and its people, and because you humbled yourself before me and tore your robes and wept in my presence, I have heard you, declares the LORD. Now I will gather you to your fathers, and you will be buried in peace. Your eyes will not see all the disaster I am going to bring on this place and on those who live here” (2 Chron. 34:27–28).*

Because of the sins of his fathers, Josiah came to the throne of Judah while the temple was in shambles. The Book of the Law had been lost. King Josiah did not even know the requirements of the Lord. In the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, he began to repair the temple of the Lord. While cleaning the temple Hilkiah, the priest found the Book of the Law. When Josiah heard the Law read, he looked at all they were doing as a nation in light of God's Law—God's plumb line. Josiah cried out to God. He tore his robes in brokenness before God.

He was fearful because He now knew that God had promised to punish His people if they did not keep His covenant and His Law. Josiah must have felt betrayed by his fathers who were kings before him. “How could they have been so irresponsible?” he must have asked. Josiah now saw clearly the symptoms of a people who had departed from the Lord. As leader, he immediately went to the Lord for directions. Josiah sought a word from the Lord through the prophetess Huldah. “Go and inquire of the LORD for me and for the remnant in Israel and Judah about what is written in this book that has been found. Great is the LORD's anger that is poured out on us because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD; they have not acted in accordance with all that is written in this book” (2 Chron. 34:21). She sought the Lord and brought back a word from Him.

*“This is what the LORD says: I am going to bring disaster on this place and its people—all the curses written in the book that has been read in the presence of the king of Judah. Because they have forsaken me and burned incense to other gods and provoked me to anger by all that their hands have made, my anger will be poured out on this place and will not be quenched” (2 Chron. 34:24–25).*

First, God told Josiah it was too late for the nation. His final judgment was going to come on the nation. God is very patient, but He does not withhold His anger forever. About forty years later, God told Jeremiah: “Do not pray for the well-being of this people. Although they fast, I will not listen to their cry; though they offer burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Instead, I will destroy them with the sword, famine and plague” (Jer. 14:11–12). God told Jeremiah it was too late to even pray about the matter any longer. God's call to His people is: “repent or perish.” When we hear that call, we had better respond. The time will come when repentance is no longer an

option. At that point our only expectation is judgment.

Fortunately for Josiah, God saw His brokenness and delayed sending the judgment (you read 2 Chron. 34:27-28 at the beginning of the day). God doesn't just look on our outward actions. He looks on our hearts. He saw that Josiah truly was brokenhearted because of the sins of the people. His response saved a whole generation from God's final judgment. One very significant fact in this revival account is that God decided to spare that generation from His judgment after Josiah responded but *before* the people repented. When the leader repented, God heard and responded. Josiah then guided the people as they all returned to the Lord:

*Then the king called together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. He went up to the temple of the LORD with the men of Judah, the people of Jerusalem, the priests and the Levites—all the people from the least to the greatest. He read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant, which had been found in the temple of the LORD. The king stood by his pillar and renewed the covenant in the presence of the LORD—to follow the LORD and keep his commands, regulations and decrees with all his heart and all his soul, and to obey the words of the covenant written in this book.*

*Then he had everyone in Jerusalem and Benjamin pledge themselves to it; the people of Jerusalem did this in accordance with the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.*

*Josiah removed all the detestable idols from all the territory belonging to the Israelites, and he had all who were present in Israel serve the LORD their God. As long as he lived, they did not fail to follow the LORD, the God of their fathers (2 Chron. 34:29–33).*

Josiah guided the people to repent. They gave evidence of their return to the Lord by removing all the false gods and obediently serving the Lord. They followed the Lord with their whole hearts. Once the people had repented, Josiah guided the people in the celebration of the Passover and the Feast of Unleaven Bread. This was a time of celebration and praise for all the things God had done for Israel in delivering the people from Egyptian bondage. After their repentance, joy returned to worship: "The Passover had not been observed like this in Israel since the days of the prophet Samuel" (2 Chron. 35:18).

## SEEKING GOD FOR REVIVAL IN THE LAND



- Ask the Lord to reveal His plumb line through the Scriptures.
- Pray that our leaders, both local and national, will recognize God's call to repentance and turn their own hearts back to Him. Pray that they will have the courage to call for the changes repentance will require.
- Pray that God will be merciful and give us more time to repent. We don't know how close we may be to that place where judgment is not longer avoidable. (See Luke 13:6-9.) Pray for one more year.

*Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people he chose for his inheritance (Ps. 33:12).*

The following proclamations serve as an example from history where the leaders of the United States called their people to repent of their individual and national sins. The Congress and the President sensed the Civil War they faced was the result of God's righteous judgment of the nation for their sins. The division of the nation was great. There was no reason why the United States could not have become two separate countries after that great war. However, the leaders called the nation to prayer and repentance. The war came to an end; the nation was reunited; and the land was healed. This is a testimony of how God can bring a deeply troubled nation to repentance. The following excerpts come from two of the several proclamations issued by President Lincoln between 1861 and 1864.

**As you read the following proclamations, underline the statements that recognize God's hand of discipline and judgment for the sins of the people and the nation. Underline statements indicating that the people were ready to cry out to God for mercy.**

## **Proclamation of a National Fast Day, August 12, 1861**

"Whereas a joint committee of both houses of Congress has waited on the President of the United States and requested him to recommend a day of public prayer, humiliation, and fasting, to be observed by the people of the United States with religious solemnities, and the offering of fervent supplications to Almighty God....

"It is fit and becoming in all people, at all times, to acknowledge and revere the supreme government of God; to bow in humble submission to his chastisements; to confess and deplore their sins and transgressions, in the full conviction that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and to pray with all fervency and contrition for the pardon of their past offenses....

"Whereas when our own beloved country, once, by the blessing of God, united, prosperous, and happy, is now afflicted with faction and civil war, it is peculiarly fit for us to recognize the hand of God in this terrible visitation, and in sorrowful remembrance of our own faults and crimes as a nation and as individuals, to humble ourselves before him and to pray for his mercy....

"Therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do appoint the last Thursday in September next as a day of humiliation, prayer, and fasting for all the people of the nation."

## Proclamation of a National Fast Day, March 30, 1863

“Whereas, the Senate of the United States, devoutly recognizing the supreme authority and just government of Almighty God in all the affairs of men and of nations, has by a resolution requested the President to designate and set apart a day for national prayer and humiliation:

“And whereas, it is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord;

“And insomuch as we know that by his divine law nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world, may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be but a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins... We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown; but we have forgotten God... we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.

“It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness....

“I do hereby request all people to abstain on that day from their ordinary secular pursuits, and to unite at their several places of public worship and their respective homes in keeping the day holy to the Lord.... All this being done in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope authorized by the divine teachings, that the united cry of the nation will be heard on high, and answered with blessings no less than the pardon of our national sins, and the restoration of our now divided and suffering country to its former happy condition of unity and peace.”

### SEEKING GOD FOR REVIVAL IN THE LAND



- Pray that God would once again raise up leaders in our nation who understand these spiritual truths and have the courage to call for national repentance.
- Pray that God's people and spiritual leaders will begin the process of returning to the Lord before our nation has to suffer an increasing intensity of God's judgments that would bring us to such desperation.

**SEEKING GOD  
TOGETHER  
FOR REVIVAL  
IN THE LAND****SESSION THREE**

**Call on a volunteer to open your session with prayer.**

**Read. Deuteronomy 28:15-68.**

Discuss the ways God disciplined people in the past when they departed from Him and His laws. Are any of the disciplines listed taking place in our nation today?

[Alternate: Read Jeremiah 8:4-12. Discuss similarities to the spiritual condition in our nation today. What do we need to do to avoid the same consequences for sin?]

**Review what God has been saying to you through His Word and His Spirit.**

1. What Scripture, statement, idea, testimony, or illustration that you read this week was most significant or meaningful to you and why?
2. What truth has God revealed this week that seems to have the greatest significance for revival in our nation?

**Respond to the Lord in prayer.**

Ask the Spirit to guide your prayers according to the will of the Father. Pray conversationally focusing on one subject at a time. Respond to the Lord about the things He has been revealing in your devotions this week.

**Talk Together. Discuss some of the following questions or raise questions of your own.**

1. What do we need to do individually or as a group in response to what God is saying through His Word, prayer, circumstances, and other believers?
2. What are two reasons that God disciplines His people? (pp. 34-35)
3. How have you experienced God's discipline in the past and how did you respond?
4. What are the differences between eternal and temporal judgments? What are the differences between remedial and final judgments?
5. What truths about God and His judgments (pp. 38-39) were particularly meaningful for you to understand?

6. What encouragement can we gain from the story of Nineveh's repentance? (See the Book of Jonah.)
7. Which examples of the ways God disciplines are we experiencing in our church and/or our nation today?
8. What statements in the proclamations from President Lincoln on pages 44-45 reveal most clearly how far the leaders in our nation have drifted from the God of our forefathers? How do we need to pray for our nation today?

**Testify to what God has done.**

If God has done something special in your prayer times this week or in your personal walk with Him, share a brief testimony with a focus on what God has done.

**Seek God Together for Revival in the Land**

Spend the remainder of your time in prayer for a fresh encounter with God in revival in your lives, churches, communities, and in our land. Pray about one topic at a time. Let the Spirit guide your prayers. You may want to consider some of the following directions for your prayers. Take notes if God reveals things as you pray.

1. Pray that the Lord will reveal to spiritual leaders the true severity of our spiritual condition. Ask Him to make clear the times He is working to correct us through His discipline. Pray that spiritual leaders will have the courage to call us to repentance.
2. Pray that God will prepare national leaders who understand God's ways and will be able to guide us should we face a time of crisis due to God's judgments.
3. Pray that our leaders, both local and national, will recognize God's call to repentance and turn their own hearts back to Him. Pray that they will have the courage to call for the changes repentance will require.
4. Pray that God will be merciful and give us more time to repent. We don't know how close we may be to that place where judgment is no longer avoidable. (See Luke 13:6-9.) Pray for one more year.

**NOTES**