The Power of Rebuke, Reproof and Correction

Proverbs 27:17 TPT 17 It takes a grinding wheel to sharpen a blade,
and so one person sharpens the character of another.
NKJV *As* iron sharpens iron,
So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.
God tried using Rui when I was smoking Crack
He tried using my uncle when I had two females in my room

God is so gracious He brings the warning before He steps in.
Stepping in mean getting beat up by 8 cops
Going to prison for 5 years
How about being sick for 13 because we don't want Rebuke Reproof or Correction

Now God Confronts Us, Convicts Us, and Changes Us

2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NKJV "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

God uses His Word to confront what is wrong in our lives, reveal where we have gone astray, and lead us back into righteousness.

If you allow his word to be profitable in rebuke, reproof, and correction, it will develop a heart that receives God's discipline rather than resisting it.

GOD LOVES US TOO MUCH TO LEAVE US THE WAY WE ARE

Proverbs 3:11–12 (NKJV) "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor detest His correction; for whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights."

One of the greatest evidences of God's love is that He does not leave us in the condition in which He found us.

God loves us too much to allow you to continue down a road that will harm you spiritually. He loves us too much to allow our pride, disobedience, bitterness, or rebellion to go unaddressed.

We often pray for God to bless us, open doors for us, increase us, and give us favor. But are we equally willing to pray, "Lord, rebuke me,reproof me, correct me when I am wrong"?

We want God to encourage us, but will we allow Him to confront us? We want Him to comfort us, but will we allow Him to convict us? We want Him to lead us, but will we follow when He tells us something we don't want to hear?

Jeremiah 10:23–24 (NKJV)

> **"O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps. O LORD, correct me, but with justice; Not in Your anger, lest You bring me to nothing."**

Jeremiah understood that he needed more than his own wisdom. He needed God's direction, and he was willing to ask God for correction.

This is the heart we need: a heart that is humble enough to admit we do not know everything, teachable enough to receive instruction, and obedient enough to change.

Three important truths

1. **Rebuke confronts what is wrong.**
2. **Reproof reveals and exposes where we have gone wrong.**
3. **Correction brings us back toward what is right.**

They describe important ways God uses His Word and godly instruction to shape our lives.

"If we want God to change our lives, we must be willing to let Him correct our lives."

I. REBUKE - GOD CONFRONTS WHAT IS WRONG

2 Timothy 4:2 (NKJV) "Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching."

Paul gives Timothy a serious responsibility. He is to preach God's Word faithfully, whether it is convenient or inconvenient, whether people welcome it or resist it.

Paul does not tell Timothy only to encourage people. He tells him to convince, rebuke, and exhort.

Why? Because people need more than encouragement. Sometimes they need to be confronted with the truth.

A. What is rebuke?

A rebuke is a direct confrontation of sinful or harmful behavior. It identifies something that needs to stop.

- **Rebuke confronts behavior that is contrary to God's Word.**
- **Rebuke refuses to make excuses for sin.**
- **Rebuke calls people to recognize the seriousness of their actions.**

A faithful rebuke is not about humiliating someone, proving that we are better than they are, or getting the last word. It is about bringing what is wrong into the light so that it can be addressed.

Titus 2:15 (NKJV) 15Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

The responsibility of a spiritual leader is not to tell people only what they want to hear. It is to faithfully communicate what God has said.

B. Sometimes love must confront

Proverbs 27:5–6 (NKJV) "Open rebuke is better Than love carefully concealed.Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."

- genuine love does not always remain silent.
- There are times when saying nothing may feel easier, but silence can allow someone to continue in a harmful direction.
- A faithful friend may have a difficult conversation because they care about the other person's spiritual well-being. Their words may hurt initially, but their intention is to help rather than destroy.
- An unfaithful person, on the other hand, may tell us what we want to hear while allowing us to continue making destructive choices.

A powerful saying for the sermon:

1. **“Sometimes the person who loves you enough to tell you the truth will hurt your feelings, while the person who tells you everything you want to hear may be helping you destroy yourself.”**
2. **We must remember that not every painful word is faithful, and not every criticism is godly. The correction must be truthful, appropriate, and delivered with a desire for restoration.**
3. **The question is not simply whether someone's words hurt. The question is whether the words are true, whether they are necessary, and whether they are being offered in a godly spirit.**

C. David and Nathan: When God confronts our sin

2 Samuel 12:1–13

David committed serious sins involving Bathsheba and Uriah. Rather than allowing David to continue without confrontation, God sent Nathan the prophet.

Nathan told David a story that exposed the injustice of someone's actions,and David was furious and wanted to kill that man. Then Nathan declared, **“You are the man!” (2 Samuel 12:7).**

David could have attacked Nathan, denied the accusation, or attempted to protect his reputation.

Instead, David acknowledged his sin.

2 Samuel 12:13 (NKJV) “I have sinned against the LORD.”

- David's response demonstrates the importance of receiving correction with humility.
- “Sometimes we can look at the person who pointed out the problem like the person who created the problem.”
- We become angry with the person who confronts us. We question their motives, criticize their delivery, or focus on how the conversation made us feel. Meanwhile, we never deal with the very issue that needed to be addressed.
- Nathan did not create David's sin. He exposed it.
- We must be careful not to confuse the person who reveals the problem with the person responsible for the problem.
- At the same time, we should examine criticism honestly rather than automatically assuming every accusation is correct. God's Word, truth, and godly wisdom must guide our correcting and our response.

D. Rebuke can protect our future

Psalm 141:5 (NKJV) 5Let the righteous strike me; *It shall be* a kindness. And let him rebuke me;*It shall be* as excellent oil; Let my head not refuse it. For still my prayer *is* against the deeds of the wicked.

- We must be willing to receive correction from the righteous.
- We must understand that a faithful rebuke can be a kindness rather than an attack.
- Consider how many mistakes could be avoided if we learned to listen before becoming defensive.
- A warning can prevent a person from walking into danger. A rebuke can awaken someone who has become comfortable with sin. A difficult conversation can become the beginning of restoration.

"A rebuke may wound our pride, but when it is grounded in truth and delivered in love, it can help protect our spiritual future."

Ask yourself

- Can I receive a difficult word without immediately becoming defensive?
- Do I become angry with people who point out my mistakes?
- Am I more concerned about protecting my reputation than correcting my behavior?
- When God's Word confronts me, do I repent or make excuses?

Rebuke confronts what is wrong. Reproof goes deeper by exposing our error and helping us understand where we have departed from the truth.

II. REPROOF - GOD REVEALS WHERE WE HAVE GONE WRONG

2 Timothy 3:16 (NKJV) "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

Reproof is the process of exposing error and demonstrating what is wrong. God's Word not only confronts our behavior; it reveals where our thinking, attitudes, and actions disagree with His truth.

A. God's Word exposes the condition of our hearts

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) 12For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of

soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

- **We can hide our attitudes from other people. We can present a good appearance in church while carrying resentment, pride, jealousy, or unforgiveness in our hearts.**
- **But God's Word will reach beneath outward appearances.**
- **It exposes not only what we do but sometimes why we do it.**
- **We might serve because we genuinely love God, or we might serve because we want recognition. We might correct someone because we want to restore them, or we might correct them because we want to prove that we are right.**
- **The outward action may look similar, but the heart behind it can be very different.**

Psalm 139:23–24 (NKJV) "Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting."

1. **This prayer is of someone who wants truth more than self-justification.**

B. Reproof helps us recognize our blind spots

Peter confronts Paul **Galatians 2:11–14 11Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; 12for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. 13And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. 14But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before *them* all**

1. **Peter withdrew from eating with Gentile believers because he feared criticism from certain people. His behavior contradicted the truth of the gospel and influenced others to follow his example.**
2. **Paul confronted him because the issue was more than a private preference. Peter's actions affected the church's witness and its treatment of Gentile believers.**

3. **Peter needed to recognize the inconsistency between what he believed and how he behaved.**
4. **We can know the right Scripture and still behave in the wrong way. We can preach forgiveness while holding a grudge. We can teach humility while refusing to admit our mistakes. We can speak about faith while allowing fear to control our decisions.**
5. **Sometimes we know the truth in our minds, but God must work on the truth taking root in our hearts.**
6. **Reproof allows God's truth to reveal those inconsistencies.**

C. Reproof requires a teachable spirit

Proverbs 10:17 (NKJV) "He who keeps instruction is in the way of life, But he who refuses correction goes astray."

two directions, two choices : the way of life and the way of going astray.

The person who keeps instruction listens, learns, and applies what is right. The person who refuses correction rejects the very guidance that could keep them on the right path.

Refusing correction does not always look like openly saying, "I will not listen."

Sometimes it looks like constantly making excuses. Sometimes it looks like blaming everyone else. Sometimes it looks like hearing a sermon, knowing it applies to us, and deciding that it must be meant for somebody else.

We can be physically present when God's Word is preached but spiritually resistant to what He is saying.

"Every time we reject correction simply because we do not like how it feels, we risk taking another step away from the wisdom God wants to give us."

D. Reproof must be received, not merely heard

James 1:22 (NKJV) "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."

- **Hearing the truth is not the same as accepting the truth. Accepting the truth is not the same as obeying the truth.**

- **The purpose of reproof is not to make us feel bad for a few minutes. It is to help us see clearly so that we can respond faithfully.**

"Reproof opens our eyes to what is wrong; humility allows us to do something about it."

God does not expose our errors simply to leave us feeling guilty. He shows us what is wrong so that we can return to what is right. That brings us to correction.

III. CORRECTION - GOD RESTORES US TO THE RIGHT PAT

PROVERBS 20:30 30Blows that hurt cleanse away evil,
As *do* stripes the inner depths of the heart.

This is a powerful verse about correction, discipline, and the transformation of a person's heart.

1. Sometimes correction has to hurt before it helps.

- **The word blows and stripes refer to painful discipline or correction.**
- **Solomon is teaching that sometimes a person needs more than encouragement. They need correction that gets their attention.**
- **There are times when gentle advice isn't enough. A difficult consequence, a rebuke, or a painful experience can wake someone up and cause them to reconsider their ways.**
- **In other words, sometimes what hurts us is what teaches us.**

2. God is concerned with what is happening inside the heart.

Notice the second part of the verse:

"...the inner depths of the heart."

This is important because God isn't just interested in changing our outward behavior. He wants to deal with what's happening on the inside.

- **Pride needs to be corrected.**
- **Rebellion needs to be confronted.**
- **Sin needs to be exposed.**
- **Our motives need to be examined.**
- **Our hearts need to be brought back into alignment with God.**

Sometimes the deepest problem isn't what a person is doing; it's what is happening in their heart that is causing them to do it.

Jeremiah 10:23–24 (NKJV) "O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps. O LORD, correct me, but with justice; Not in Your anger, lest You bring me to nothing."

- ➔ **Jeremiah acknowledges two important truths: we cannot direct our lives perfectly through our own wisdom, and we need God to correct us when we go astray.**
- ➔ **Correction is not merely identifying the wrong path. It is turning back toward the right one.**

3. Painful correction can produce a better person.

Think about how a loving parent disciplines a child. The correction may not feel good at the moment, but its purpose is to produce maturity, wisdom, and better decisions.

(NKJV): Hebrews 12:10–11 10For they indeed for a few days chastened *us* as seemed *best* to them, but He for *our* profit, that *we* may be partakers of His holiness. 11Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Notice that word afterward.

The pain is temporary, but the fruit of correction can last a lifetime.

"God is not just interested in making us feel better; He's interested in making us better."

Sometimes we pray for God to remove the pressure, but God wants to use the pressure to change us.

Sometimes we ask God to change our circumstances, but He wants to change our character.

Sometimes we want God to silence the correction, but the correction is exactly what we need to hear.

Proverbs 20:30 is not teaching that abuse or violence is justified. It is illustrating the seriousness and sometimes painful nature of discipline and correction.

Don't despise correction just because it hurts. Sometimes the very thing that wounds our pride is the thing that saves us from destroying our future.

A. Correction begins with humility

Proverbs 3:11–12 11My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD,
Nor detest His correction; 12For whom the LORD loves He corrects,
Just as a father the son *in whom* he delights.

- ➔ **When God corrects us through His Word, He is calling us to examine our lives in light of His truth.**
- ➔ **"Before we pray for God to change the people around us, we should be willing to ask Him to change the person within us."**

B. God's correction must be understood in the light of His character

Psalm 6:1 (NKJV) "O LORD, do not rebuke me in Your anger, Nor chasten me in Your hot displeasure."

1. **These passages teach us that we should take sin seriously while appealing to God's mercy.**

C. Correction requires repentance and changed behavior

Acts 3:19 (NKJV) "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord."

- ➔ **Correction should lead us toward repentance, obedience, and restoration.**
- ➔ **If God reveals that our words are wrong, we must change how we speak. If He reveals bitterness, we must begin dealing with it according to His Word. If He reveals disobedience, we must turn toward obedience.**
- ➔ **"Correction has not accomplished its purpose when we simply acknowledge that we were wrong; it begins to accomplish its purpose when we respond by doing what is right."**

D. Refusing correction can cause us to go astray

Proverbs 10:17: "He who keeps instruction is in the way of life, But he who refuses correction goes astray."

- ➢ **This warns us what happens when we reject instruction. A person who repeatedly refuses correction can become increasingly confident in the wrong direction.**
- ➢ **The danger is not only making a mistake. It is becoming unwilling to acknowledge the mistake.**

Proverbs 29:1 1He who is often rebuked, *and* hardens *his* neck, Will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

- ★ **"Every time we reject correction and harden our hearts, we move closer to the consequences of our own stubbornness.**
- ★ **"God's correction is a warning of mercy; but when we continually reject His warnings, we risk reaching a place where the consequences can no longer be avoided."**

4. HOW WE CORRECT OTHERS MATTERS

1 Thessalonians 5:14 (NKJV) "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all."

This teaches us that not everyone needs the same response.

Paul teaches us several different responsibilities.

- **Warn those who are unruly.**
- **Comfort the fainthearted.**
- **Uphold the weak.**
- **Be patient with all.**

This means that godly correction requires discernment. We must understand the condition of the person we are helping.

A. Some people need a warning

- **Those who are unruly or disorderly may need a direct warning because their behavior is causing harm or departing from what is right.**
- **Truth must not be abandoned simply because it is uncomfortable.**

B. Some people need encouragement

The fainthearted may be discouraged, overwhelmed, or struggling to find the strength to continue.

They may not need harsh rebuke. They may need someone to remind them of God's promises, help them regain perspective, and encourage them to keep walking in faith.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NKJV) "Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing."

- **We must not mistake every struggle for rebellion. Sometimes a person is not resisting God; they are simply weary and need encouragement.**

C. Some people need support

- ➔ **Paul says to uphold the weak.**
- ➔ **There are people who need someone to walk beside them, pray with them, strengthen them, and help them through a difficult season.**
- ➔ **A person who is weak may need support before they can take the next step. Our responsibility is not to shame them for struggling but to help them stand.**

Galatians 6:2 (NKJV) "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

D. Everyone needs patience and endurance

Paul says, "Be patient with all."

Some people need a warning, some need encouragement, some need support. All need to be treated with patience and endurance.

This does not mean that we ignore sin, excuse destructive behavior, or avoid necessary boundaries. It means that we do not lose sight of the person's dignity while helping them grow.

Growth often takes time. Some people respond quickly to correction; others need repeated instruction, prayer, and support.

God has been patient with us, and we must learn to show patience toward others.

2 Timothy 2:24–25 24And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, 25in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, 26and *that* they may come to their senses *and* escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will.

- **"Correction without patience can become harshness, and patience without truth can become compromise. We need both truth and patience."**

E. The goal is restoration, not humiliation

Galatians 6:1 (NKJV) says: "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted."

- **Our job is to *restore*.**
- **The goal is not to embarrass the person, win an argument, or prove that we were right. The goal is to help someone return to a healthy relationship with God and a life of obedience.**
- **We can say something true in a way that unnecessarily wounds another person. We can also avoid speaking the truth because we are afraid of an uncomfortable conversation.**

➔ **“The purpose of godly correction is not to push people away from God but to help them return to Him.”**

5. THE HEART THAT RECEIVES CORRECTION

We have considered how God corrects us and how we should correct others: But what kind of heart do we have when correction comes to us?

A. The wise person receives instruction

Proverbs 15:31–32 31The ear that hears the rebukes of life Will abide among the wise. 32He who disdains instruction despises his own soul, But he who heeds rebuke gets understanding.

- ➢ **Listening to the rebukes of life is part of walking in wisdom.**
- ➢ **A wise person does not assume every criticism is correct, but neither do they reject criticism simply because it is uncomfortable.**
- ➢ **They examine what is said, compare it with God's Word, and remain willing to learn.**

B. Pride makes correction difficult

1. **Pride says, “I am not the problem.”**
2. **Humility says, “Lord, show me what I need to see.”**
3. **Pride focuses on the other person's delivery. Humility also examines whether the message contains truth.**
4. **Pride wants to win the argument. Humility wants to grow in righteousness.**
5. **Remember the statement from earlier:**
6. **“Sometimes we can look at the person who pointed out the problem like the person who created the problem.”**
7. **We must be careful not to let our feelings distract us from the truth God may be using to bring something to our attention.**
8. **At the same time, we should test what we hear against Scripture and exercise discernment. Not every accusation is justified, and not every person who confronts us is acting with godly motives.**

C. We must remain teachable throughout our lives

Proverbs 10:17 17He who keeps instruction *is in* the way of life, But he who refuses correction goes astray.

- **No matter how long we have been Christians, how much Scripture we know, or how much experience we have, we must remain teachable.**
- **Spiritual maturity is not reaching a place where we no longer need correction. It is becoming more willing to receive correction and respond faithfully.**
- **"A teachable heart is not a heart that never makes mistakes; it is a heart that is willing to acknowledge mistakes and allow God to change it."**

CONCLUSION: DO NOT REJECT WHAT GOD USES TO CHANGE YOU

Lets go back to original scripture 2 Timothy 3:16–17.16All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

1. REBUKE — God confronts what is wrong.

Sometimes we need a warning that stops us from continuing down a destructive path.

2. REPROOF — God reveals where we have gone wrong.

His Word exposes our error, challenges our thinking, and helps us see what we could not see on our own.

3. CORRECTION — God restores us to the right path.

He calls us to repentance, obedience, and spiritual growth.

And as we help others, we must remember 1 Thessalonians 5:14: some need warning, some need encouragement, some need support, and all need patience.

Do not pray only for God to bless you. Pray for Him to search you, teach you, correct you, and shape you into the person He has called you to be.

"Lord, give me a heart that is humble enough to receive Your rebuke, honest enough to accept Your reproof, and obedient enough to follow Your correction. Help me to speak truth in love, to encourage those who are

discouraged, to support those who are weak, and to remain patient with others as You continue working in me."

Closing prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your Word and for loving us enough to correct us.

Forgive us for the times we have resisted Your voice, justified our mistakes, or refused to acknowledge our wrongdoing. Give us humble hearts that welcome Your truth.

When You rebuke us, help us listen. When You reprove us, help us see clearly. When You correct us, give us the grace to obey.

Lord, teach us not to confuse the person who points out a problem with the person who created it. Give us wisdom to discern truth, humility to acknowledge our mistakes, and courage to make the changes You require.

Help us correct others with the right spirit. Teach us when to warn, when to encourage, when to support, and when to patiently walk alongside someone who is struggling.

May our words bring restoration rather than humiliation. May our correction be guided by Your truth and our attitudes shaped by Your love.

Keep us from pride, defensiveness, and spiritual stubbornness. Make us people who are willing to learn, willing to repent, and willing to grow.

Let Your Word continue to shape our hearts until our lives reflect the character of Jesus Christ.

In Jesus' name, Amen.