

**Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge,
but whoever hates correction is stupid.**

Proverbs 12:1

When do we get corrected?

Why might we “hate” it? (emotion and/or action)

Why is hating correction stupid?

What is it like to be corrected by God?

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The Unseen Hand of God

Acts 21:37-22:29

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Spanish page 1420
English-Green page 761
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Setting

- Paul came to Jerusalem, the center of Judaism
 - He was bringing a gift of money from **Gentile Christians** to **Jewish Christians**
 - Accompanied by several **Gentile Christians**
- Paul was anticipating trouble.
- His concerns included...
 - **Non-Christian Jews** would attack him
 - **Christian Jews** would reject the Gentiles and their gift

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Setting

- To make peace, **Christian Jewish** leaders told Paul to do a public Jewish ritual in the temple
 - Paul did as they directed him
- **Non-Christian Jews** made false accusations and started a riot that included the whole city!
 - Their focus: trying to kill Paul
- Roman soldiers rescued Paul by arresting him

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*Acts 21:37-22:29***37-22:2 Paul got permission to speak to the crowd**

- 3-5 • Greek got the attention of the commander
- 6-11 • Thought he was an Egyptian rebellion leader
- 12-16 • Perhaps the commander thought the people also
- 17-21 were confused about Paul → let Paul clarify
- 22-29 • “Brothers and Fathers”: perhaps some in the crowd were Jewish leaders (Sanhedrin)
 - Aramaic got the attention of the Jewish crowd
 - The common language for Jews in Jerusalem (concerned about the Temple when outsiders came)

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Acts 21:37-22:29

37-22:2 Paul got permission to speak to the crowd

3-5 Paul persecuted the Way (Jesus) [same as the crowd]

- 6-11 • Paul told the story of God’s work in his life
- 12-16 • An example of “Reaching out”
- 17-21 • Paul’s (Saul) story started where they are
- 22-29 • He emphasized what made them alike
 - Jewish, grew up in Jerusalem, trained by a great Rabbi in the Law, zealous for God
 - Even perhaps a hero from their perspective
 - Active persecutor of “the Way” (Christianity)

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3-5 Paul persecuted the Way (Jesus) [same as the crowd]

6-11 Jesus interrupted Paul's attack on the church

12-16 • God (light & voice from heaven) stopped Paul

17-21 • It was actually Jesus of Nazareth (God)

- 22-29 • Paul was attacking God when attacking the Way
- Paul asked for correction: "What shall I do, Lord?"
 - God had an appointed plan for Paul

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6-11 Jesus interrupted Paul's attack on the church

12-16 Paul was healed and baptized by a practicing Jew

17-21 • Emphasized Ananias' good standing among Jews

- 22-29 • Message to Paul:
- God of the Patriarchs appointed Paul for a task
 - Appointed to see & hear the Messiah (Jesus)
 - Appointed to be a witness to "all people"
 - Commanded to be baptized: a conversion into Christ

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12-16 Paul was healed and baptized by practicing Jew

17-21 Jesus interrupted Paul again: "Go to the Gentiles"

- 22-29 • While praying in the temple (perhaps 3 years later)
- Jesus appeared again: "Leave Jerusalem!"
 - Why? The Jews in Jerusalem won't listen to you
 - Paul objected: he wanted to reach his own people
 - Jesus: They won't listen to you
 - God's plan: Go to the far away Gentiles

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- 22-29 Chaos, to be flogged, yet he was rescued by citizenship**
- People were furious about God's word to Paul
 - They would not listen any longer!
 - Demanded Paul's death: blasphemy
 - Paul did not hide the upsetting part of his story
 - Commander began a harsh interrogation
 - Paul's birth-citizenship saved him

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The Big Idea

God is working all things together

Paul's citizenship, language abilities, training, speaking ability

through **natural** and **supernatural** means

Voice and appearances of Jesus from heaven to Paul, miracles

in sometimes **unexpected ways**

Paul's plan: reach the people who were most like him → not God's plan!

to form His Kingdom

of peoples from all nations

despite intense opposition

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Application

- Seek correction from God
 - Paul accepted God’s major corrections
 - The people refused God’s corrections

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In the Lord’s hand
the king’s heart is a stream of water
that he channels
toward all who please him.

Proverbs 21:1

- **God has plans for all peoples**
- **God directs people in their plans**
- **Even through the mightiest humans
who may oppose God**

So we should...

**Welcome God’s correction in our lives
Trust in His ability to correct others**



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Application

- Seek correction from God
 - His ways **must** ~~sometimes~~ **often!** be contrary to our inclinations and expectations
 - How will we hear God's correction of us?
 - 1) Decide that His plan is better than ours
 - I say to the Lord, "You are my Lord; apart from you I have no good thing." *Psalm 16:2*

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Application

- Seek correction from God
 - His ways **must** ~~sometimes~~ **often!** be contrary to our inclinations and expectations
 - How will we hear God's correction of us?
 - 1) Decide that His plan is better than ours
 - 2) Ask God to correct us
 - "Search me, God, and know my heart; **test me** and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and **lead me** in the way everlasting." *Psalm 139:23-24*

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Application

- Seek correction from God
 - His ways **must** ~~sometimes~~ **often!** be contrary to our inclinations and expectations
 - How will we hear God’s correction of us?
 - 1) Decide that His plan is better than ours
 - 2) Ask God to correct us
 - 3) Pursue a humble heart
 - “Whoever **loves discipline** loves knowledge, but whoever hates correction is stupid.” *Proverbs 12:1*

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Application

- Seek correction from God
 - His ways **must** ~~sometimes~~ **often!** be contrary to our inclinations and expectations
 - How will we hear God’s correction of us?
 - 1) Decide that His plan is better than ours
 - 2) Ask God to correct us
 - 3) Pursue a humble heart
 - 4) Listen carefully to the Spirit and follow
 - Through the Bible, through people, directly

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Application

- Seek correction from God
- Boldly join God's plan, even in conflict
 - “We and the people there pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, **‘Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.’** When he would not be dissuaded, we gave up and said, ‘The Lord’s will be done.’” *Acts 21:12-14*

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Application

- Seek correction from God
- Boldly join God's plan, even in conflict
 - Opposing God is a bad place to be!
 - When speaking of the earlier church, the priest said: “If it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; **you will only find yourselves fighting against God.**”
Acts 5:39
 - Joining God's side is the only good place to be!
 - “If God is for us, **who can be against us?**” *Romans 8:31*

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Here is God's plan...

God is working all things together
through **natural** and **supernatural** means
in sometimes **unexpected ways**
to form His Kingdom
of peoples from all nations
despite **intense opposition**

How might God be correcting us?

- **Sometimes we are opposing God**
- **Sometimes we are ignoring God**

How is God using you?

What appointed (new/expanded) role might God have for you?