

ISSUE	DISCIPLINING	PRUNING
How do you know it's happening?	Pain	Pain
Why is it happening?	You're doing something wrong	You're doing something right
What is your level of fruitfulness?	No fruit (represented by Basket 1)	Fruit (represented by Basket 2)
What is the Vinedresser's desire?	Fruit (represented by Basket 2)	More Fruit (represented by Basket 3)
What needs to go?	Sin	Self
How should you feel?	Guilty, sad	Relief, trust
What is the right response?	Repentance (stop your sinning)	Release (give God your permission)
When does it stop?	When we stop sinning	When God is finished

PRUNING VERSUS DISCIPLINE—WHICH IS IT?

You can distinguish pruning from discipline by asking a few simple questions. I encourage you to carefully review the accompanying chart. If you suspect that you are being pruned, follow these steps:

1. Acknowledge that God is trying to get your attention. Decide that you don't want this season of turmoil to go to waste.
2. Trust that since a loving parent would tell a child why he or she is receiving correction, your loving Father will do no less. Believe that He wants you to know whether you are experiencing discipline or pruning.
3. Ask the Lord to help you answer this question: *Do I have a major sin that's causing You to discipline me?*
4. Pray, *Lord, I want to know. If You do not show me within a week from today that it is discipline, then I will take it by faith that it is pruning.* From my own experience, I can assure you that God has many ways to let you know if sin is the issue—you will find the truth in a Scripture, a conversation, a teaching, or a phone call from a friend.
5. If you conclude that you're being disciplined, sin is the problem. Repent and turn around. You'll never regret it.
6. If you conclude that you're being pruned, your response is just as crucial, and the rewards will be even greater. Ask God to show you clearly what He wants you to let go of, and trust Him enough to release it completely to Him.

(Wilkinson, *Secrets of the Vine*, 65-67)