

Discipline and Admonition of the Lord

- *And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up (nurture) in the discipline and admonition of the Lord. Eph 6:4*
- This is the command to fathers (parents) to reveal how they must fulfill the command:
- *Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ. Eph. 5:19*
- This is the stewardship God has given parents.
- We must submit to this just as we do all of God's commands. We can't lean on our own understanding, but seek full submission to God

When Should Discipline Begin?

- Because newborns can't communicate, God created them to make their needs known by crying.
- When hungry, lonely, uncomfortable, sick or in need, they cry to let their parents know.
- At first, they don't have the ability to think about others.
- They don't understand the inconvenience they create for their parents when crying at 3:00 am.
- This is normal and acceptable. No need for discipline.

Foolishness in the Heart of a Child

- *Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of correction will drive it far from him. Pr. 22:14*
- There is a transition that occurs as infants learn to speak and communicate and cries of need become assertions of will or frustration.
- “occurring sometime between 18 months and three years old, the terrible twos are associated with increased assertiveness, desire for independence, and frustration.”
- This is the beginning of “foolishness.”

All Foolishness = Rod of Correction

- Once children learn to communicate and begin manifesting selfishness, dominance, or frustration at not getting their way, it is time to begin.
- They must be trained that anything the Scriptures identify as unrighteousness (treating others unfairly and unjustly) is wrong.
- Much of what they do during the “terrible two’s” is a violation of love, humility, and submission.
- It will damage all future relationships in school, sports, friends, jobs, marriage, and parenting.
- If we don’t help them remove and control them they create great heartache for them and others.

The Blessings of Discipline

- God offers parents the ability to bless their children by helping them control and replace them
- Discipline helps them stop being selfish, angry, or seeking dominion.
- Replacing them with self-control, unselfish care and concern, and a desire to serve and bless others
- It is never too early to help children learn humility and submission as a foundation to become “*last of all*” and *servant of all*.” (Mk. 9:35).
- Children trained to be “*poor in spirit*,” “*meeke*,” “*peacemakers*,” and “*merciful*” will be greatly blessed (Mt. 5:1-12).

Identifying “Foolishness”

- God’s character of justice, mercy, love, kindness compassionate and giving is our template.
- All our a child exhibits leading away from this is “*foolishness*” that must be removed.
- It begins when cries of need become cries of frustration and dominion.
- As they learn to speak, NO! I WON’T! STOP! are words of foolishness. When they snatch things from others, hit, or manifest selfishness.
- It is time to begin using the “rod of correction.”

The “*Rod of Correction*”

- This is a relative term covering all forms of discipline. Clearly a young toddler is not ready for a literal “rod.”
- The “rod of correction” is anything parents use to show a child such behavior is wrong.
- In the earliest days it can be a stern voice or a light slap on the leg so they can see disapproval
- As they grow older, the rod becomes a switch from a tree, a belt, a hand, removal of privileges or any punishment that will bends a child’s will toward God and His commandments.

The Boundaries of Discipline

- There is a fine line between discipline and abuse and God is very clear it must not be crossed.
- It is based on the child's response.
- *Fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. (Eph. 6:4).*
- Discipline that provokes a child to anger or wrath is not being properly administered.
- A child's anger is a clear sign something is wrong.
- Discipline should leave a child contrite and chastened, but not angry. Anger is a danger sign

Keeping Discipline Fair

- The definition of righteousness is “justice, fairness, and equity.”
- When a child screams “*that’s not fair,*” it is a clear sign we are getting close to being wrong.
- It may be a false charge to be explained/discussed
- But if it is true, we must repent, show our godly sorrow and apologize (confess).
- All discipline comes from God’s commands, not from our own frustration or anger.
- There must be a Scripture that justifies discipline.
- True discipline is administering God’s justice. We simply show them why God commanded me to help you stop this behavior by this discipline.

We are not the Authority ... God is

- Since all discipline must be administered fairly and in compliance to God's commands.
- We simply explain that truth to them.
- God commanded it to bless them, bring them future happiness, and eternal life.
- When a child becomes angry or bitter as discipline is being administered. We simply quote Scripture
- *He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly. (Pr. 13:24).*
- It is not coming from parents, but from God.

A Child Must Understand

- *Chasten your son while there is hope, and do not set your heart on his destruction. (Pr. 19:18).*
- *Do not hold back discipline from the child, Although you strike him with the rod, he will not die. 14 You shall strike him with the rod And rescue his soul from Sheol. (Pr. 23:13-14).*
- *The rod and rebuke give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.. 17 Correct your son, and he will give you rest; yes, he will give delight to your soul. (Pr. 29:15,17).*

Submitting to Authority made Easy

- Convince them you only use authority to bless and help them. Even Jesus used this approach:
- *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."* Mt. 11:28-30
- We just need to show them that our goal is to remove them from the tyranny of the destructive emotions we are trying to help them overcome.
- All commands become reasonable and welcomed when it is clear they are designed for our good.

Discipline in Context

- Discipline is a small portion of our interaction with our children.
- Most of the time we are teaching, training, loving and enjoying our children.
- As we serve the Lord with joy, we train them to do the same.
- *"And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. Deut 6:6-8*

Bolstering Discipline with Truth

- Since “*the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows His handiwork,*” (Ps. 19:1)
- We can speak of God’s “*glory*” and create reverence by pointing out the amazing complexities of His “*handiwork.*”
- The more awe and reverence we can place into their minds, the easier it will be to use Scripture when difficult times arise.

Respecting God strengthens Discipline

- *His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His everlasting power and Divinity,” (Rom 1:20).*
- We talk of these things always.
- Every beautiful and wondrous thing we see and enjoy pointing to God
- A beautiful rose, the ocean and mountain peaks, a field of almond or cherry trees with their white and pink blossoms all speak of His generosity, power and wisdom.
- When we must discipline, we remind them of all the good God has done.

● *Bless the Lord, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits: 3 Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, 4 Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies, 5 Who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. (Ps. 103:2-5)*

● We use all the tools God has left to bind all of us to Him. Even the blessings and enjoyment of our food is something we should use:

● *“He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.” Acts 14:17).*

Well Rounded Parenting

- The goal is to help our children succeed in life.
- All discipline is directed to that end.
- As our children's faith in God and trust in us develop from infancy, they will accept discipline.
- When they see the Scriptures, understand the reasons and feel the love, they will not become angry.
- It is all in how we balance it all.