

Fatherhood & Child Discipline

1. The purpose of this study is to refresh us all on the responsibilities and methods of parenting as God has established and communicated them in the Bible. We'll look at the following facts from scripture.
 - a. Children are a blessing from God.
 - b. The responsibility for training children falls upon the parents.
 - c. Foolishness is bound in your child's heart.
 - d. The biblical method of disciplining your children is with the rod of reproof.
 - e. The biblical method of instructing your children is with the holy scriptures.
 - f. Examples of how not to train children.

2. Having children is a great blessing. **PSA 127:3-5, 128:3-6; GEN 33:5**

3. The responsibility for training children falls upon the parents.
 - a. The father is the head of the household. **EPH 6:1 c/w 5:22-24**
 - b. Fathers are to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition *of the Lord*, which are laid down *in his word*. **EPH 6:4, PRO 22:6**
 - i. Nurture – breeding, upbringing, training, education.
 - ii. Admonition – the action of putting in mind of duties; *authoritative* counsel; warning, implied reproof.
 - iii. Train – III. 5. To treat or manipulate so as to bring to the proper or desired form; spec. in Gardening, to manage (a plant or branch) so as to cause it to grow in some desired form or direction, esp. against a wall, or upon a trellis or the like. 6. To subject to discipline and instruction for the purpose of forming the character and developing the powers of, or of making proficient in some occupation. (Also with *up*.) a. To instruct and discipline generally; to educate, rear, bring up.
 - iv. Note the preposition *up* in *bring up* and *train up*.
 1. This suggests a standard up to which the child is being brought.
 2. The goal of fathers is to bring their children to maturity, which is the state or quality of having the powers of body and *mind* fully developed; fullness or perfection of development or growth.
 - a. When a child is mature, he has come up to the standard.
 - b. The standard of maturity is Jesus Christ. He is the perfect man. **EPH 4:13**
 - c. Therefore, a Christian education is essential to a proper upbringing (recall the definition of nurture). **COL 2:3; ROM 12:1-2; COL 3:10; EPH 4:23**
 - v. An excellent example of a father doing his duty according to these definitions is found in Proverbs 4.
 1. The father is equipping the son with what he needs for life.
 2. Wisdom is the principal thing the father is to impart. It is not something imparted in birth.
 3. He both teaches *and* leads (v. 11)
 4. He points out the right path and warns against the wrong path. This is admonition by definition.
 5. This father is actively participating in the training of his children as he is charged to do.
 - c. Mothers are to help in this responsibility. **GEN 2:18; PRO 1:8**

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- i. Parental agreement in child training is necessary to avoid sending confusing messages to children. **PRO 1:8, 6:20**
 - ii. This emphasizes the importance of marrying someone with whom you agree in the faith.
 - iii. If father and mother have a different definition of what constitutes a Christian both cannot be right.
 - iv. Remember that the father is the head of the household and he is ultimately accountable to God for ensuring that proper training is being employed. **EPH 6:1 c/w 5:22-24**
 - d. Your children will learn naturally. But training them in the way they should go requires purposed effort on your part. **PRO 29:15**
4. Foolishness is bound in your child's heart. **PRO 22:15**
 - a. foolishness: 1. The quality or condition of being foolish.
 - b. foolish (adj): 1. Fool-like, wanting in sense or judgment. 2. Befitting a fool; proceeding from, or indicative of folly.
 - c. fool (noun): 1. One destitute of reason, or of the common powers of understanding; an idiot; a natural. 2. A person deficient in intellect; one who acts absurdly, or pursues a course contrary to the dictates of wisdom; one without judgment; a simpleton; a dolt.
 - d. destitute (adj): Forsaken; not having in possession (something necessary, or desirable); deficient; lacking; devoid
 - e. Children are deficient in reason, understanding, intellect, wisdom and judgment; these things need to be instilled in the child by his parents.
 - f. Foolishness is not just found in the heart of a child, it is *bound* there. **PRO 22:15**
 - i. bound (ppl. a) [pa. ppl of bind v] 1.a Made fast by a tie, confined; fastened down; bandaged: also fig.
 - ii. Foolishness cannot escape on its own. It is confined to the child's heart, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him. **PRO 22:15**
 - g. You must actively drive the foolishness from your child, or he will become a fool and you will be put to shame. **PRO 29:15, 10:1, 17:21; PSA 14:1**
5. The biblical method of disciplining your children is with the rod of reproof.
 - a. The rod and reproof give wisdom. **PRO 29:15**
 - i. rod (noun): A straight and slender stick; a wand; hence, any slender bar, as of wood or metal (applied to various purposes). Specifically: (a) An instrument of punishment or correction; figuratively, chastisement.
 - ii. reproof (noun form of the verb reprove): An expression of blame or censure; especially, blame expressed to the face; censure for a fault; chiding; reproach.
 - iii. reprove (verb): To reject; to express disapproval of (conduct, actions, beliefs, etc.); to censure, condemn; to reprehend, rebuke, blame, chide, or find fault with (a person).
 - b. The rod is an instrument of chastening. **PRO 13:24**
 - i. betimes (adv.): 1. In good season or time; before it is late; seasonably; early. 2. In a short time; soon; speedily; forth with.

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- ii. chasten (v.t.): 1. To correct by punishment; to inflict pain upon the purpose of reclaiming; to discipline; as, to chasten a son with a rod. 2. To purify from errors or faults; to refine.
- iii. Chastisement is the painful consequence of a misdeed.
 - 1. The purpose for chastening a child is to teach him that irresponsible actions have painful consequences.
 - 2. If a child is always shielded from the consequences of misbehavior, he will not be prepared for adult life.
- iv. There are two kinds of punishment.
 - 1. Natural punishment is the consequence of wrongdoing such as loss or injury.
 - 2. Artificial punishment is a devised means of punishment to help a child associate pain or hardship with a misdeed. The rod is an artificial punishment.
- c. Breaking the bonds of foolishness from a child's heart demands severity and sternness, not gentleness and tenderness. **PRO 23:13-14**
 - i. beat – to strike repeatedly; to strike with repeated blows
 - ii. It is not cruel to beat a child in a disciplinary manner; rather it is necessary to deliver the child from hell. cf. **1CO 5:5**
 - 1. This does not promote or condone the hostile beating of a child by an abusive or drunken parent.
 - 2. The beating here refers to a correctional action taken by a loving parent with the intent of saving the child from destruction, not delivering the child to destruction.
 - iii. The chastening of a child with the rod should incite pain and tears from the child. **PRO 19:18**
 - 1. This is the expected result and the parent should not lament over it.
 - 2. To succumb to the child's tears is to essentially give control to the child and leave his innate foolishness intact.
 - 3. Do not train your child that if he cries loud enough the spanking will stop.
 - 4. When God chastens his children, it is sometimes very painful and draws many tears, but it is still necessary and it's always for our betterment. **HEB 12:11**
- d. The rod should be accompanied with reproof. **PRO 29:15**
 - i. The rod is not to be applied merely to inflict pain, but rather to impart instruction.
 - ii. The rod is to be used to enforce the disapproval of specific misconduct.
- e. Use of the rod should begin early in life. **PRO 13:24, 19:18**
 - i. If chastening is not applied early in life, it could lead to an unchangeable problem. **PRO 19:18 c/w PRO. 27:22**
 - ii. A parent that neglects, for whatever reason, to chasten his child, is a parent that does not love his child, though he thinks and claims that he does. **PRO 13:24**
 - iii. To leave off chastening a child is to leave them in their own folly and sin, which no loving parent would do.
- f. Use of the rod is not the only means to discipline a child, but it must be part of the overall package if you intend to train your child as God intends you to do.
 - i. You don't need to beat your child for every wrongdoing.
 - 1. Parents should distinguish between childhood ignorance and rebellion.
 - 2. Ignorance is something to be corrected with knowledge, which is sometimes best applied with the rod and reproof, but not always.

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3. rebellion - open or determined defiance of, or resistance to, any authority or controlling power.
 4. When they dig in their heels and refuse to obey, that is rebellion.
 5. Rebellion is a clear-cut case for the rod.
- ii. Be clear in the instructions you give.
 - a. If you expect your child to do or not do something, tell him, do not ask him. **1TH 2:11**
 - b. charge (v.t.): To lay on or impose, as a task, duty, or trust; to command, instruct, or exhort with authority; to enjoin; to urge earnestly.
 - c. Make sure your instructions are clearly defined so that your child knows exactly what is required or forbidden. (e.g. precisely defining what you mean by cleaning the bedroom or being out too late)
 - d. Make sure your instructions are realistic; within the child's ability to perform.
 - e. Give instructions in such a way that your children know that you mean *what you say when you say it*.
 - f. Giving clear instructions helps the child understand your expectations and also helps you know when discipline is necessary.
 - iii. Parents should be consistent in their application of the rod (and any other forms of discipline they employ).
 1. Children will test you (more than you know) and they are extremely persistent. If you are inconsistent, they will find your weakness and exploit it.
 2. If you tell your child you are going to beat him for something, do it.
 3. If you beat your child for something once, you should beat him again for the same wrongdoing. If it's important enough to warrant a beating the first time, it's important enough to warrant a beating the second time.
 - g. Consistent application of the rod is a tried-and-true (and biblical, too) method of correcting children.
 - h. Think about *what* you are training your children by *how* you are training them.
 - i. Consider what you are training when you allow a child to get his way by persistent begging and whining.
 1. You are training the child that persistent begging and whining pay off.
 2. Do you want him to stop begging and whining? Then you stop it!
 3. We are to do all things without murmurings and disputings. **PHP 2:14**
 - a. murmur (v) 1. To make, produce or emit a low continuous sound. 2. To complain or repine in low muttered tones; to give vent to an inarticulate discontent, to grumble.
 - b. dispute (v) 1. The act of disputing or arguing against; active verbal contention, controversy, debate.
 4. Don't let them argue in the moment. If they have a grievance, let them know they can discuss it with you after they have done what you told them to do. The discussion should be done calmly, reasonably and peacably.
 5. You ought to be training him to be obedient to his parents which sets him up for later in life when he will need to be obedient to his master (e.g. employer). **EPH 6:1; COL 3:20; EPH 6:5-7**
 - ii. Consider two different ways of training a young child not to touch something.

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1. You can keep it within his reach and train him not to touch it by punishing him if he touches it.
 - a. This teaches him to obey the command not to touch.
 - b. This teaches him to restrain himself even in the presence of a forbidden object that is accessible.
 - c. This prepares him for the real world, where things are well within the reach of little children. Likewise it prepares the child for adult life where actions have consequences.
 2. You can put it beyond his reach.
 - a. This teaches him that it is off limits only if it is out of reach.
 - b. This does not teach him to respect your command not to touch.
 - c. This does not prepare him for the real world, where things are well within the reach of little children. Likewise, it does not prepare the child for adult life where actions have consequences.
 - iii. What is a child learning who is given everything he wants when he wants it?
 1. Do not be surprised if such a child grows up to be overweight, overly in debt, or beholden to an entitlement mentality.
 2. God expects people to work. **2TH 3:10-12**
 - iv. How are you training a child when you do everything for him? Do not be surprised if he grows up shirking responsibility. You trained him that way.
6. The biblical method of instructing your children is with the holy scriptures. A proper upbringing must include instruction to accompany the discipline.
- a. Teach your children the scriptures, and make it a daily part of your life. **DEU 6:7-9; PSA 78:4-6; PRO 6:20-23; ISA 38:19; 2TI 3:15**
 - i. Read the scriptures daily to your children. They are our daily bread. **MAT 4:4**
 1. You will be amazed at what they learn and remember.
 2. They will not only learn the scriptures, they will learn language, grammar, vocabulary, etc.
 - ii. Don't wait until you think they are old enough to understand. Children have an amazing capacity to learn from infancy.
 - iii. Start when they are in the womb and continue until they are out of your house. **LUK 1:41,44**
 - iv. Children learn by imitation.
 1. imitation 1. a The action or practice of imitating or copying.
 2. imitate (v) 1. trans. To do or try to do after the manner of; to follow the example of; to copy in action
 3. Children will begin to learn the form of worship by watching and listening to you.
 4. They will learn how to sit quietly and listen to the word of God.
 5. They will learn that you love the word of God, and will learn to love it also.
 6. My children could repeat multiple verses of scripture verbatim before age two.
 - a. We read the scriptures to them daily.
 - b. We read the same passage of scripture every day for 1-2 weeks. Repetition is key.

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- c. They did not understand everything they heard or recited, but the word of God was being worked into them from infancy, and this helps to form their mind and train their affection on the things of God.
 - v. Refer to these excellent sources of instruction for teaching your children the scriptures and training them in general.
 - 1. Guidelines for Teaching Children the Scriptures, Pastor Boffey (Mar 2003)
 - 2. It Begins At Home, Pastor Boffey (Jul 2005)
 - 3. Ruling and Training Children, Pastor Boffey (Mar 2009)
 - 4. Education, Pastor Boffey (Oct 2007)
 - 5. Preparing Your Kids for the Real World, Pastor Wagner (Dec 2017)
 - b. Pray God to bless your efforts, however feeble, and continue doing by faith your duty as a parent, trusting that God's word will have its intended effect. **ISA 55:10-11; PRO 22:6**
- 7. Examples of how not to train your children.
 - a. Do not be a pushover, or your children will ignore what you say. **GEN 19:14**
 - b. Do not honor your children more than you honor God. **ISA 2:22-29; 3:13**
 - c. Do not let your children get away with whatever they want. **1KI 1:5-6**
- 8. Summary
 - a. Parents are responsible for training their children.
 - b. Children are evil from birth, having foolishness bound in their heart.
 - c. Parents need to drive their foolish nature from their children with the rod and they need to teach their children the scriptures to properly develop their mind.
 - d. This method is applicable as long as your children require chastening and are still under your parental authority.
 - e. When you find it hard to chasten your children, refer back to these clear passages to renew your own mind and then do your duty by faith trusting God to honor his word. **PRO 13:34, 19:18, 22:15, 23:13-14, 29:15,17**
 - f. You can rest and relax and enjoy yourself knowing you've done your duty as a parent.