

PARENTING

Training, Discipline and the Rod

Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Eph 6:4

I. Training

A. Who are we training?

- Sinners

Folly is bound up in the heart of a child... Prov. 22:15a

“Remember children are born with a decided bias towards evil, and therefore if you let them choose for themselves, they are certain to choose wrong... If, then, you would deal wisely with your child, you must not leave him to the guidance of his own will. Think for him, judge for him, act for him, just as you would for one weak and blind; but for pity’s sake, give him not up to his own wayward tastes and inclinations.”¹

- Immature, Dependent , Pliable

“He gives your children a mind that will receive impressions like moist clay. He gives them a disposition at the starting-point of life to believe what you tell them, and to take for granted what you advise them, and to trust your word rather than a stranger’s. He gives you, in short, a golden opportunity of doing them good. See that the opportunity be not neglected, and thrown away.”²

¹ J.C. Ryle, *The Duties of Parents* (Conrad, MT: Triangle Press, 1997), 3.

² *Ibid.*, 7.

B. How Do We Train our Children to Obey?

1. Model/demonstrate/example
2. Review/remind/repeat outside the boundaries of temptation
3. Clearly communicate expectations and standards
4. Boundaries should be reasonable
5. Words should be specific clear and defined
 - Don't touch this.
 - Put your toys away, into the basket.
 - No
 - Please do not go into this room.
6. Encourage, praise obedience

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.” Eph. 4:29

- Make a big deal out of obedience and progress.
 - Look for evidences of grace.
7. Correct behaviors and attitudes that are not biblical

C. Training Requires that we:

1. Distinguish Between Principle vs. Practice

Principle

- Love your God
- Love your neighbor

- Do not lie
- Do not covet
- Do not steal
- Children obey your parents

Practice

- Bed time/Sleeping habits
- feeding habits/ scheduling issues
- home schooling
- types of toys, styles of music, only one hour of videos a day

2. Understand the Central Importance of the Heart

- The Heart Leads to Behavior
- Behavior Reveals the Heart

3. Recommended Areas to Train

- Responding to “no” (remember specific commands)
- Changing attitude when adjusted
- Looking in the eyes**
- Temper tantrums
- Sitting quietly
- Greeting adults
- Practice of worship/prayer
- Kindness to other children
- Coming when called
- Learning to say please/thank you
- Respect for adults and adult environment. (Not interrupting adults). “Come into the room with your eyes and ears first, not your mouth”

Behold children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward, Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.

Psalm 127:3-5

II. Discipline

It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much

more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Hebrews 12:7-11

- A. Reproof**
- B. Spanking/The Rod**
- C. Forfeiting Privileges**
- D. Isolating Offenders**
- E. Don't Make Spiritual Exercises Punitive**

III. The Rod

“The Rod is a parent, in faith toward God and faithfulness toward his or her children, undertaking the responsibility of careful, timely, measured and controlled use of physical punishment to underscore the importance of obeying God, thus rescuing the child from continuing in his foolishness until death.”³

Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him. Proverbs 13:24

Discipline your son, for there is hope; do not set your heart on putting him to death. Proverbs 19:18

Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him. Proverbs 22: 15

Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you strike him with a rod, he will not die. If you strike him with the rod, you will save his soul from Sheol. Proverbs 23: 13-14

The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother. Proverbs 29:15

A. The Rod Is: ⁴

1. A Parental Exercise

³ Ted Tripp, *Shepherding a Child's Heart* (Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 1995), 130.

⁴This entire section is taken directly from *Shepherding a Child's Heart*, Tedd Tripp. See pages 131-134.

2. An Act of Faith
3. A Responsibility
4. A Physical Punishment
5. A Rescue Mission

B. The Rod Is Not:

“If you do find yourself more upset because your child has sinned against you than you are because he sinned against God, you must quickly and prayerfully get your heart in such a state that personal desires are temporarily set aside. You must be willing to lay aside your personal rights and forgive your child’s offense against you so that you may focus on fulfilling your parental obligations to him. Only then can you discipline your child with the assurance that your passion is not unholy anger.”⁵

1. Not the Right to an Unbridled Temper
2. Not the right to Hit our Children Whenever We Wish
3. Not Venting (Anger) “Frustration”
4. Not Retribution

IV. Spanking

A. Age Ranges

1. Begin 1 - 2
2. Regularly 2 - 6
3. Decrease 6 - ???

B. Is to be Given With a Right Motive

1. Love God/ Obey God
2. Love the child

C. Is on the Basis of Clear, Prior and Understood Instructions

1. For clear disobedience and persistent defiance
2. Disobedience: when instruction and training have made the standards clear enough to enforce
3. Defiance

⁵ Lou Priolo, *The Heart of Anger* (Amityville, NY: Calvary Press, 1997), 33.

D. Should Usually be Administered by the Father, If He is Present

1. Leadership/Servanthood
2. Support/ Reinforces Mother's Authority

E. Is Given in Private

If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.
Matthew 18:15

F. Should be Given as Soon as Possible After the Offense

1. So child won't forget. The discipline must be connected with the offense.
2. Avoids guilt
3. Prevents confusion

G. Clarify the Issue

1. What they did
2. Why the spanking
 - a. "I love you and when you disobey, God commands me to love you by teaching you wisdom. When we disobey God's ways, there are consequences."
 - b. What is the specific sin issue?
 - c. The Bible says....and you've been taught...."
 - d. "Daddy/ Mommy said"
 - e. "If you disobey (mommy and daddy), you disobey God"
 - f. Helping them to see the need of a savior. Why did you sin?
 - g. The need for a savior: "Can you stop without the Lord's help?"

3. What to Use

- Sturdy, but flexible instrument
- Able to cause discomfort without harm or injury
- Prevents associating hands with correction/ punishment

a. Must be Received Willingly (Age Appropriateness)

1. "Come to Daddy/Mommy"
2. "Lean over knees or bed"
3. "Must receive, be still"
4. "No screaming in anger"

5. "No comments or criticizing"

- b. Is to be Administered Calmly and With Self-Control
- c. Must be Followed by Affection/Hug (but not yet completed)
- d. Reconciliation
 - 1. Acknowledge that they have sinned. "I was wrong"
 - 2. Identify the sin by its biblical name. "I was angry, selfish, etc..."
 - 3. Identify the biblical behavior to demonstrate a commitment to change. "I should have asked and not hit my brother"
 - 4. Ask daddy/mommy for forgiveness for disobedience/violating standards. Make sure they are asking for forgiveness for their sins
 - 5. Commit to go to all offended parties and ask for forgiveness. (Make this a part of the process of reconciliation with God)
 - 6. Ask for forgiveness from God (Prayer, see below)
 - 7. Encourage them to trust the gospel and ask Jesus for faith to trust and obey him.
- e. Involves Prayer
 - 1. "Father, will you please forgive me for..." - (specific behavior and heart attitude)
 - 2. Specific repentance: Help them to see the issue clearly. "I was wrong; I'm sorry."
 - 3. Confession of Need for a Savior
 - 4. Thank Jesus for coming and dying on the Cross. Ask for the Spirit's help to believe in the gospel, and receive power to change. (I cannot change myself; I need You.)
- f. Requires Assurance
 - 1. Forgiveness
 - 2. Love
 - 3. Acceptance
- g. Is Followed With Lavish Affection
 - 1. Express Gratefulness
 - 2. Affirm Reconciliation
 - 3. Commend for Receiving Correction

h. Is Concluded When the Child is Reconciled

1. Comforted
2. Peaceful
3. Affectionate
4. Communicating

i. May Require Follow-through

1. Humbly and respectfully ask other offended party(s) for forgiveness
2. Obey violated command or principle

j. May Include a Follow-up Assignment

NOTE: Bible study, memorization and prayer must not be introduced as “punishment”, but as a means of renewing the mind and changing the heart in order to bear godly fruit.

V. Biblical Parenting Ages 0-5

A. Parental Sanctification: Many Times Our Struggle With Parenting Reveals Sin Issues in Our Own Lives

1. Anger
2. Unbelief
3. Self-pity
4. Impatience/self righteousness/Arrogance

“We must not expect all things at once. We must remember what children are, and teach them as they are able to bear. Their minds are like a lump of metal—not to be forged and made useful at once, but only by a succession of little blows.”⁶

B. Positioning them to receive Life-Transforming Grace Through the Resources God Provides

C. With a view beyond the immediate

⁶ J.C. Ryle, *The Duties of Parents* (Conrad, MT: Triangle Press, 1997), 5.

D. Remember God's Goal: Christ formed in you and your children:

My little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you! Gal. 4:19

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. Col. 1:28-29

E. Remember God's Promises

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it. I Thess 5:23-24

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Rom 8:28-32

RECOMMENDED READING

The Duties of Parents – J.C. Ryle

God, Marriage, and Family – Andreas Kostenberger

Proverbs (and related commentaries – Derek Kidner, Charles Bridges)

Shepherding A Child's Heart – Tedd Tripp

Instructing A Child's Heart – Tedd Tripp

Teach Them Diligently – Lou Priolo

For Discussion, Evaluation and Application

1. Where do you see evidences of God's transforming grace in your life and the lives of your children?
2. Why is an understanding of the gospel so important to a proper foundation and motivation for training our children?
3. As you consider the child training just received, would it be a heartfelt conviction for both you and your spouse that your child training and instruction is rooted in the application of Scripture?
4. Fathers, ask your wives to evaluate your leadership in: (a) training your children (b) fellowship with other parents (c) evaluating your marriage and parenting (d) loving her
5. Ladies, ask your husbands to evaluate your submission to their leadership.
6. Which aspects of your training process could use improvement? What will you do to bring about lasting change? Describe any changes in your understanding of the relationship between training and discipline.
7. Describe the difference between principle and practice. Are there any adjustments that you need to make in applying this to your parenting, or to your observations about others?
8. Which aspect(s) of your spanking process could use improvement? Please explain. What steps will you take to begin a process of lasting change?
9. What specific sin has been frequently exposed in your heart as you have pursued the process of training your children?
10. With whom will you regularly discuss the things that God has spoken to you through this material for the purpose of fellowship, prayer, encouragement and accountability?
11. What are your top two or three prayer requests for yourself as a parent, desiring to train your children for the glory of God and for their good?
12. What are your top two or three prayers requests for your children as you pursue the wonderful privilege of "training them up in the way they should go"?