

Biblical Principles Of Parenting – Discipline (Part 1)

Heb 12:5-11; We're in a series on parenting, based on Prov 22:6 – *Train up a child in the way he should go*; That's our mandate, our marching orders
The point of which, is to build your family on the rock solid truths of God's Word, that are foundational for a life and lineage built to last

And Principle #9 brings us to a sensitive issue; Sensitive, b/c it's abused, and misunderstood, and feared, and sometimes even frowned upon
And yet the Bible has some very clear and very definitive things to say about it
Referring to discipline; And the principle is this . . .

Principle #9 – Don't fail to discipline (Heb 12:5-11)

Don't fail to bring consequences to bear for the purpose of righteousness; That's discipline
And as a parent, it's a responsibility we can't afford to ignore
Otherwise, we'll train up kids who do what they want and make a mess of their lives, while dragging those around them into the same; Heb 12:5-11

[5] *And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?* [He's speaking to believers here; The people of God; And then quotes the exhortation]

“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. [6] For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.” [Straight from Prov 3 (v11-12)]

[7] *It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons.* [IOW keep on keeping on b/c the benefits of God's discipline far outweigh the detriments] *For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?* [8] *If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.* [9] *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?* [10] *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.* [11] *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.*

➤ W/out covering everything in this passage there are 5 reasons here to discipline our kids

1. It's what God does (v6)

Don't fail to discipline your kids, b/c that's exactly what God does with us
V6 – *the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives*
Every son; Every daughter; Every child he calls his own
Or as Jesus says it in Rev 3:19 – *Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline*
Don't fail to discipline *your* kids, b/c that's what God does with his

2. It's the norm in good parenting (v7b)

That's v7b – *For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?*
It shouldn't be a surprise that *God* disciplines us, b/c that's what fathers do; That's what parents do; At least good ones; They bring consequences to bear . . .
For the purpose of righteousness in their kids; It's the norm

3. It conveys love (v8)

Don't fail to discipline, b/c it conveys love; Which every kid in the history of the world, disputes; “Son, I'm doing this b/c I love you”
“Ya right, you love me; Sure doesn't feel like it; Could have fooled me”

But that doesn't negate the fact that you do; And that your discipline conveys it
V8 – *If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated* [there's the normal part again], *then you are illegitimate children and not sons* [not even considered a part of the family]. IOW a *lack* of discipline conveys a *lack* of love
While the presence of it conveys just the opposite

Prov 13:24 is explicit – *Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.* Discipline comes from love, and conveys love*****

4. It teaches respect (9a)

V9 – *Besides this* [besides the fact that discipline is the norm in good parenting, and conveys love], *we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them.*

It may not happen right away, but your kids will eventually respect you for making them toe the line; At least to the extent your discipline was godly and good
They'll respect you for it; Which is not only good for *you*, but for them
B/c respecting authority is a *must* for a life well-lived and well-blessed
And there are far too many people walking around today who don't do it, b/c they never learned it as a kid

5. It yields righteousness (11)

V11 – *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.*

Those who have been molded by it; Shaped by it
Including righteous teenagers whose parents disciplined them as toddlers; It's possible
You don't have to dread the teenage years, and they don't have to be a re-hashing of the terrible twos
Win the battles when your kids are young, and *later*, when they're older, you won't have to fight as many; B/c the peaceful fruit of righteousness will be in full bloom
It's the 5th reason from this passage alone

➤ But there's one more, implied from a *variety* of Scriptures, that I think is *also* worth mentioning; Namely . . .

6. It guards against permissive parenting (Gen 18:19)

Discipline guards against allowing your *kids* to call the shots, instead of you
Or as God said it in Gen 18:19 referring to Abraham – *I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD*
I have chosen him that he may *command* them
That's about as directive as it gets; And anything *but* permissive
Not that you should rule your house with an iron fist like it's all about you; That's authoritarian parenting; And bad in its own right

➤ But that's not the norm these days; The norm, is permissiveness; Where the *child* is the decision maker, and the parent the doer
Listen to what Tedd Tripp says in his book **Shepherding a Child's Heart**

“As a school administrator, I observe that most parents do not understand the appropriateness and necessity of being in charge of their child's life. Rather, parents take the role of adviser. Few are willing to say, for instance, “I have prepared oatmeal for your breakfast. It is a good, nutritious food and I want you to eat it. Maybe other mornings we will have something you like better.”

[Instead] Many are saying, “What do *you* want for breakfast? [If] You don’t want the oatmeal, [is there] something else [you would like]?” This sounds very nice and enlightened, but what is really happening? The child is learning that *he* is the decision maker. The parent only suggests the options.

This scenario is repeated in the experience of young children in clothing choices, schedule choices, free-time choices, and so forth. By the time the child is six or eight or ten, he is his own boss. By age thirteen the child is out of control. Parents can cajole, plead, urge . . . scream and threaten, but the child is his own boss. The parent has long since given up the decision-making prerogative in the child’s life.

How did it happen? It crept in at a very early age as the parent made every decision a smorgasbord of choices for the *child* to decide.” (*Shepherding* . . . , Tripp 31)

That’s the *norm*; Permissive through and through; Where parents don’t command, they don’t decide, and they certainly don’t discipline*****

- Does that mean you can’t buy 3 different cereals and let your kids choose each day? Not at all; It just means you can’t do that with everything; Or even most things And you certainly can’t let them choose their standard of behavior; Nor let them off the hook if they violate yours Do *that*, and you’ll train up a child to *be* a child, the rest of their life (**Summary**)

That’s principle #9; And 6 reasons for it; Don’t fail to discipline

That said, it’s equally important, that you . . .

- **Do it well**

Don’t fail to discipline, but do it well

Some of my biggest regrets in parenting, were times when I didn’t discipline well

When I became angry; Or yelled; Or made it all about me

It’s under the blood now; And God’s grace is sufficient to forgive and relieve

And my girls have long *since* forgiven; And maybe even forgotten

But I wish I hadn’t gone there; And if I can spare *you* from doing so, I’ll be very happy

So let me give you 5 guidelines to that end; Guardrails really, to keep you out of the ditch, and help you discipline well

The first is this – make sure it’s . . .

- **Loving**

If godly discipline is supposed to *convey* love as we saw a few minutes ago, then make sure your approach doesn’t negate that; Make sure it doesn’t overshadow your love And if it does, make sure you’re quick to repent and apologize; And then bear fruit in keeping with that repentance

Don’t fail to discipline, but make sure it’s loving

2nd, make sure it’s . . .

- **Consistent**

If you fly off the handle for something one day, and barely notice it the next, you’re not consistent; If your punishment is different than your spouse’s . . .

Or shifts like the wind depending on your mood, you’ve got a problem

B/c your kids will shift like the wind, and confusion will *reign* in their life

Don’t fail to discipline, but make sure it’s consistent

3rd, make sure it’s . . .

- **Clear**

Make sure the reason you’re disciplining your son or daughter is stated and understood B/c **Prov 29:15** says – *The rod and reproof give wisdom* [as in a spanking and a clear reprimand; both], *but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.*

Your child doesn’t have to *agree* with your reproof, they don’t have to *agree* with your reason for discipline – but they do need to know it; Clearly so*****

Otherwise, all you’re doing is punishing them, not training them

4th, make sure it’s . . .

- **Calm**

B/c James 1:20 says – *The anger of man does not produce the righteousness that God requires.* Anger, especially in discipline, doesn’t produce righteousness in *anybody*

You or your child; In fact, it only produces *more* anger

Look at your marriage; Look at your workplace; Look at the Middle East

Anger *begets* anger, and one of the worst things you can do in parenting is perpetuate it in your home; In your kids; That’s why Paul is so explicit I think, in Eph 6:4; Saying . . .

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; Don’t incite them

And the time when you’re most at risk, is when you’re disciplining them

So make sure it’s calm; Starting with yourself

And 5th, make sure it’s . . .

- **Appropriate**

Appropriate first of all, for the *offense*; First time wrongs shouldn’t be met with the same severity as repetitive issues

And spoiling their dinner with a cookie, isn’t the same as running into the street after you’ve told them not to

And you should *never* discipline for *clumsiness*; Like spilling their milk

2nd, make sure it’s appropriate for the *child*; For some kids, a stern look is all you need That was Jessica, our oldest; We only needed to *look* at her and she melted; It was like instant repentance; Softest heart you can imagine; Just a look of disappointment Julia on the other hand, required more stringent measures; And Anna, required them more often

Whatever the case, it’s critical that you know your children, and discipline accordingly

Don’t treat a compliant child the same way you would a strong-willed one; You’ll crush their spirit instead of mold it

- And 3rd, make sure the discipline is appropriate for their *age*

Here’s the bottom line – When they’re young, spank them; When they’re older, withhold privileges

And I say spank them, b/c it’s biblical and effective

Like it says in **Prov 22:15** – *Folly* [or foolish disobedience; sin] *is bound up in the heart of a child* [it’s deep-seated], *but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.*

The *rod of discipline* referring to physical punishment in the form of spanking

Physical, b/c that’s the idea of a *rod*; And spanking, b/c there’s very little risk of injury with that part of our anatomy; It’s biblical and effective

And notice, that you can't say the rod is simply a *metaphor* for discipline; And thereby *dismiss* spanking if you want
B/c the phrase *rod of discipline* indicates, just by the verbiage, that the rod and discipline are 2 *different* things
Like saying, "the *rebuke* of discipline"; Or "the *pain* of discipline"
Rebuke and pain are *forms* of discipline, but they're not synonymous with it; They're not metaphors of it

And neither is the rod; Otherwise the verse could read – the *discipline* of discipline drives folly far from them; And that doesn't make any sense at all
So spanking can't be dismissed as a God-ordained means of disciplining our children and driving folly far from their heart

➤ Now, does that mean you can go off on your kids and hit them whenever and however you want? Absolutely not; That's child abuse
And you better make sure you never go there; It's not loving and it's not calm*****

Rather, spank them on their bottom, and make sure that the force of it is both adequate and limited; Adequate to get their attention and make them *regret* their rebellion . . .
But limited in force and extent

That's why Becky and I used our hand most of the time; Especially when our girls were toddlers; It provided instant feedback as to the force we were using
We felt it just like they did; And it hurt; We weren't namby-pamby
But it kept us from going overboard; And helped us find that sweet spot between too little and too much

➤ And then, by the time they were 6 or 7, we phased it out altogether; And I'd recommend the same for you
B/c that's when your kids are getting to the age where they can *steel* themselves against it; And the force required to get through to them . . .
Not only overshadows the reason you're trying, but risks harming them

By the age of 6 or 7 there are more effective ways to discipline; Like withholding privileges, or restricting time with friends, or taking away their phone . . .
Or giving them extra chores, or expressing a *verbal* rebuke, or all the above (**Summary**)

Whatever the case, don't fail to discipline, but make sure it's appropriate for the offense, the child, and their age
In addition to being calm, cool, and collected

Pray – Lord, forgive us of our failures in this; We need your grace; Every day; And impress on us the need to discipline well; We know we need to, and we need your help
Thank you for it; And thank you for the ability to give now

Close – Baptism services – pray, packets, rejoice
Visitor Bags; Elder/Deacon