

Parenting with Joy

Biblical Discipline: What Does It Look Like?

Grace Fellowship Church, Pastor Peter LaRuffa, June 5, 2011

I. Why should we discipline?

1. Because **we're specifically told to do so!**

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

God has married discipline and instruction together because they go hand-in-hand. Alone they are insufficient, but together they are effective!

2. Because we want to parent our kids the way God parents us!

Heb. 12:6 "For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives."

3. Because God honors it!

God uses discipline in the lives of His children...

Heb. 12:11 "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."

...and He'll use it in the lives of our children, too!

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

Prov. 29:17 "Discipline your son, and he will give you rest; he will give delight to your heart."

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

Prov. 23:13,14 “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.”

4. Because God loves authority and hates rebellion!

All authority is from God, so all rebellion is against God Himself.

Rom. 13:1,2 “...For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.”

God takes rebellion very seriously.

Deut. 21:18,21 “If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey...all the men of the city shall stone him to death...”

5. Because we love our kids.

God disciplines His children because He loves us...

Heb. 12:7,8 “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.”

...so we discipline our children because we love them.

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

If we neglect to discipline our children as the Bible prescribes, we risk more than having misbehaved kids. We miss out on one of the most precious opportunities to present the Gospel to them.

“If my heart is the source of my sin problem, then lasting change must always travel through the pathway of my heart. It is not enough to alter my behavior or to change my circumstances. Christ transforms people by radically changing their hearts. If the heart doesn’t change, the person’s words or behavior may change temporarily because of an external pressure or incentive [the pain of discipline]. But when the pressure or incentives are removed, the changes will disappear.”

Instruments in the Redeemer’s Hands
by Paul David Tripp, p. 62

II. How should we discipline?

1. Operate on a “**1 strike & you’re out**” philosophy.

Remember—we’re always teaching! When we “count to three,” repeat ourselves, etc., we teach our children to obey based on an impending ultimatum...and that’s not the healthy respect for loving authority that we’re shooting for.

2. **Put off anger**, frustration, irritation and resentment... and put on love.

Remember Heb. 12:6—God disciplines us because He loves us...not because He’s angry or personally offended.

3. Go for the heart by using the one tool sharp enough to reach it: **the Bible!**

Heb. 4:12 “For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword...discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

What Scriptures speak to this particular situation with your child?

4. **Make sure your spanking hurts** or it will be useless and potentially detrimental.

Heb. 12:11 “For the moment all discipline seems painful...but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness...”

“Making it hurt is difficult for many parents, but children must be controlled. If a parent does not control with spanking, the only other alternative is verbal abuse of guilt manipulation or accusation. This is infinitely more harmful to a child than loving, caring spanking that hurts.”

Gospel-Powered Parenting: How the Gospel Shapes and Transforms Parenting
by William P. Farley, p. 168

5. **Hold your child** close until he/she stops crying.

Remember—we discipline because we love our children. This is important in connecting the temporary pain of discipline to our love for them which remains unchanged by their sin (just like God’s love for us).

6. Connect the **“horizontal”** (between you & your child) to the **“vertical”** (between your child & God).

Ask your child to ask for God’s forgiveness for their sin. If they’re unwilling to do that, you may have to repeat your discipline with them in order to move past the mere “horizontal.”

If/When they are willing to pray, follow their prayer with one of your own. Thank God for His forgiveness and expressing your trust in Him to use this spanking in your child’s heart to bring about “fruits of righteousness,” just as He does in your life.

7. Make sure your child knows what **repentance** looks like in that particular situation.

“Now, what do you need to do to make this right with _____?”