**Godly Discipline**

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 Since the 1960’s our culture has radically shifted its view of “authority”. How we view such things as the Traditional family, Discipline, Religion, Institutions, Politics and the role that fathers play in the lives of children has changed dramatically.

Through the use of TV, Movies, Universities (Professors), self-help books and Phycology a vivid picture has been painted which states that authority is over-bearing, mean, and fails to nurture, therefore it is to be resisted. As a culture we have failed to accept that God is the ultimate authority. **Psalms 24:1 the earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him.** NLT

Our culture has all but stated that we are taking your children from you and there is nothing you can do about it. We have been taught that fighting is wrong and that it should be avoided, “*all we are saying is give peace a chance*” as men are we willing to “Fight the good Fight” and to protect what is ours. To be men who are unashamed, Godly men who love their families and stand against the tide.

**What is the purpose for which God created fathers?**

 If The God that created the universe is worthy… then He should receive the glory for our efforts. Our society has emasculated men in an attempt to make them more sensitive and presentable to the world. God desires strong and Godly men to carry the burdens of others. What is the purpose for which God has created fathers? **Simply put, *to lead his family with passion and strength, loving them enough to pass on the truth and the wisdom of God’s word.***  What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his soul? What does it matter if a man makes six figures, drives a comfortable yet respectable car and has 2.5 children if they won’t talk to him and care very little of his opinions of the world, faith, God and country?

**It starts with “me”**

God desires to help us in this process through His word and the power of the Holy Spirit. He has provided us with the tools necessary to lead our families, but if our lives are out of balance and there is a refusal to recognize our faults, how can we ask Him to bless our efforts? We first need to be in a committed relationship with Him so that our family will be healthy and blessed by any training.

Start by asking God for forgiveness. He knows our thoughts, our struggles and the areas of weakness that we all face. The bible says “That if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us” all that is required is that we ask! He is faithful and desires us to be honest with Him as well as ourselves. Humility + Honesty= A man after Gods own heart.

**The Purpose of Discipline: To establish Godly character.**

 As Fathers we have the responsibility to set the example for our children. Through discipline and biblical instruction they will learn the importance of restraining themselves as well as honoring God with their lives.

Correcting our Children’s behavior is not as important as the opportunity we have in shaping their hearts. The most important decision that they will ever make is to settle in their hearts their attitude toward God and His Son Jesus.

**What it isn’t “**Punishment” is causing someone to “*suffer”* for a crime or for bad behavior. If we fail to instruct our children as to the *“Why”*they should or shouldn’t do things we fail toprovidethem with the necessary tools to shape their view of morality

 **What it is** “Correction”is helping themto see the reasons why we do things and will always be accompanied by instruction and a change in attitude, which leads to a change of heart.

**The most important relationship**

Husbands love your wives and never treat them harshly.Colossians 3:19

 It cannot be over emphasized that the type of relationship that we have with our wife will be an important asset in raising Godly men and women. The way we treat her will have a lasting impact on our children. God commands us to love our wives, and to be patient with them just as God has been patient with us. Ephesians 5:25

 Your daughter will learn from the example of her father how a young man is to treat her and our sons will gain an understanding of the importance of protecting a woman not just physically; but that she is of infinite worth to God and that he has the responsibility to guard her heart as well.

 If we respect, honor and cherish our wives in front of our children, they will gain an understanding of:

1. How we are to treat her. 1 Peter 3:7
2. How we talk to her.
3. How we talk about her to others (Protect her privacy).
4. How we defend her honor.
5. Consult her on important matter (Consider her opinion).
6. Affection (Hugs and Kisses).

**A United Front**

 It is very important that we are united with our wives in the discipline of our children. Jesus stated that a house that is divided will not stand. Mat 12:25

1. Set the example by taking the initiative. (Don’t wait for your wife to act).
2. Discuss discipline in private (do not contradict one another).
3. Do not disagree in front of your kids.
4. Backup your spouse in matters pertaining to correction. (even if you disagree)
5. Avoid a child centered home (Balance).

**What is your child’s love language?**

Understanding your child’s natural bent will go a long way to helping you establish a deeper relationship with them. Knowing that your daughter craves hugs and kisses will strengthen the bond that you have with her. By knowing that your son cares very little about receiving “gifts” but lights up whenever Pop says “good job son I’m so proud of you” will go much farther to strengthen your relationship and helps us to gain a better understanding as to what motivates them.

1. **Quality time.** By spending time with our kids away from distractions and duties can help us to get to know their thoughts and feelings. It can help us shape their world view and build lasting memories that they will cherish well into adulthood.
2. **Acts of service.**  God has called us to a life of service, it allows us to give in order to receive. It’s not leading; it’sshowing them by our example how to serve others, loving them as our neighbor. It could be something as simple as offering them a soda pop, or helping them with their homework. It will always involve thought, sacrifice and time.
3. **Physical touch.** The power of human touch should not be overlooked. Our children have been created in the image of God and His very nature is one of relationship. A hug or a kiss lets them know that we desire to be connected with them on a deeper level. Even a hand on their shoulder can send a powerful message of love and acceptance. It should be something that we continue even when our children are older.
4. **Words of affirmation (Encouragement).** Words are so powerful that they can be remembered for a lifetime. They have the ability to build up or to wound deeply. Looking for ways to complement our children and build them up can motivate them to greatness. It lets them know that we believe in them.
5. **Gifts.** Giving a gift is another way to show them that they are loved. The point here is to bless them and let them know that they occupy our thoughts. It need not be very expensive, even a hand written note with a cookie left in their bedroom would qualify. Above all it conveys that we value the relationship that we have with them.

**Childishness vs Foolishness** a youngster’s heart is filled with foolishness,
    but physical discipline will drive it far away.Proverbs 22:15 NLT

As parents it’s a good idea to begin to identify the difference between “childishness” & “foolishness”. There can be many examples of childishness as are children grow towards maturity. Expecting our children at age 3 or 4years to behave as if they were 20 can leave us feeling frustrated and them feeling discouraged. Recognizing “*age appropriate behavior*” will help us to avoid dealing with behaviors which are natural and may not require discipline. Curiosity, clumsiness, talking to loud in church, jumping on the bed, bringing you a skillfully crafted mud pie right after you’ve had the carpets cleaned… you get the picture.

***Childishness*** is just kids being kids. Example Jonny has trouble standing still and is constantly running around, jumping and exploring. Spilt milk, knocking over a vase, staining the carpet and damaging his new pants to him just can’t be helped. He may talk too much and over use the words “It was an accident”.

***Foolishness*** is an action, attitude, or behavior where the child has received instruction. Behavior which has been clearly defined as wrong or inappropriate regardless of the child’s age should be viewed as foolishness. The first “incident” might receive a pass and some further instruction. Any additional violations should be met with appropriate consequences.

Jonny has been made aware that it is wrong to touch or handle mom’s vase because it is precious to her. If after “proper instruction” he picks it up, takes it outside and drops it… that is foolishness. While he may have dropped it by accident the difference is that this time he made a conscious decision to get involved with the vase, even though the reasons for avoiding it had clearly been laid out.

**1St time obedience**

 If our desire is to raise children who will honor God, as well as their parents, we must require that they obey and comply when asked to do any task. This is the most critical and effective tool that a parent has at their disposal. It sets a level of expectation that will be firmly established. If you don’t expect it…you won’t get it! If it is consistently applied it will yield quicker response times by our children and help us to avoid nagging. We should avoid extremes, too lenient or overly aggressive can cancel out what we are trying to accomplish. Being calm in our demeanor and being patient is a must.

1. **A reasonable amount of time.** Give them a reasonable amount of time to comply. Launching an assault 2 seconds after the command has been given will discourage them and send a message that we are unreasonable and that it is impossible to comply.
2. **Be consistent.** Starting strong but growing weary of the constant struggle can wear us down. If our children understand that we will always act when they fail to comply it will settle many issues before they ever arise.
3. **Follow through.**  As parents we want our kids to be safe and secure, we care about their well-being. Not applying a biblical model to discipline can leave us trying to fill in the gaps on our own. Follow through even though its time consuming. They will try our patience and test the boundaries. If applied correctly in the end you will reap great reward.

**The appeal’s process**

While it is normal for children to test the limits and the boundaries of their world, it is possible that misunderstandings and miscommunication may arise along the way. Sending a message that it is our way all the time and that our children (regardless of age) must comply with precision and speed can lead to discouragement. While negotiating with your children isn’t recommended it may reveal opportunities for us as parents to practice mercy and grace in regards to our kids. The old biblical adage “treat others the way that you want to be treated” can have a broad and changing affect if taken to heart.

For example, Jonny has ten minutes left on a TV program and it’s his scheduled bed time. Jonny is asked to get up and scurry off to bed. (1st time obedience)

How would I feel if my wife said OK no more football 10mins to go at the end of a climactic Super bowl! Relating to our kids and considering their point of view and their feelings can go a long way to strengthen the bond that we have with them and their willingness to comply in the future.

If done correctly and respectfully, the appeals process can give our children the sense that they have a voice. Some parents may feel that it provides the opportunity for them to buck the system and constantly appeal without end. But they soon learn that it is a valued tool to use in emergencies only, if they are diplomatic in its execution. Remember it is all about protecting the relationship we have with our kids and keeping an open dialogue.

**Never discipline in anger.** Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires. James 1:20 NLT

If we carry out discipline when angry our children can feel disconnected from us and it undermines what we are trying to do (A change of heart).

1. **Wait**…this gives us the opportunity to calm down and administer “justice” instead of “revenge”. Spend some time alone and pray.
2. **Discuss…** this is a powerful tool to place the burden of the violation at their feet. Any discipline received becomes the soul responsibility of the transgressor. It also allows us to find out if there has been a “misunderstanding” which may or may not need further clarification. Our children should be fully aware why they are being disciplined and the biblical principle or rule which has been broken.
3. **Respect…** If it is necessary to discipline remember that for a Child it can be demoralizing if not done properly. Always discuss issue whenever possible in private away from their friends, neighbors, etc. God disciplines those whom he loves; we need to consider their dignity.
4. **Follow through…** Wait till your father gets home does not apply here. It takes time, energy and consistency to maintain order and a level of respect. While there are situations where we may have to wait, i.e. the “grocery store”, while” driving in the car”, a dinner out with friends, etc. Don’t miss the opportunity to deal with the offense immediately. It will be more effective and send a message that will help them to make better decisions in the future.

**Forms of Discipline**

***Spanking*** (Age appropriate from 1 year to 8)

The procedure is simply stated as “an appropriate amount of pain delivered to the buttocks region for any attitude of defiance such as “disrespect, foul language, sassing or open defiance” etc.

Many misconceptions have erupted over the issue of spanking. First and foremost it should be stated that **it is not child abuse,** if done in context with the behavior and administered correctly. It is an act of love rather than an act of aggression. (Never in anger)

If you chose to use this technique it is recommended that it be done in private because of the societal morays as well as to protect the dignity of the child. If not administered correctly it can actually help to strengthen the behavior and instill an attitude of defiance in a strong willed child.

Parents who spank should follow up with instruction as well as encouragement. For example “I take no pleasure in this and I believe in you, I know that you can do better”. The dialogue should not belabor the offense but be used as an opportunity to reconnect with your child. A hand on their shoulder after discipline, a hug, or rubbing their back tells them that we are invested with them and that we truly do care about them. It should also be noted that if the child has experienced actual child abuse that it is not recommended and alternative forms should be sought out.

**The Loss of a privilege**

This can be especially effective if you know your child well. We as people are motivated by reward; therefore if we stand to lose something that we want even adults will alter their behavior. Our children enter a world with nothing but soon find out that birthday’s and Christmas provide a large amount of things with which to enjoy. If your son or daughter has been angling for a particular doohickey or thing-a-ma-bob it stands to reason that it will be an effective motivator if removed from their life. As stated in the next section, make sure that they are aware that this possibility exists, but avoid threatening. Parents who continue to threaten a consequence and fail to follow through are reinforcing the fact that 1st time obedience is not always required. As parents being consistent and following through will send a clear message and avoid many battles in the war for dominance.

**Time out!**

Not all kids are created equal. For some it can be a nightmare if they are sent to their room because they are a social butterfly. Others will simply amuse themselves until the “so-called” punishment is past. Standing it the corner or laying their head on the table can be a great motivator to change ones behavior. Being an effective student of our children will give some insight into their personality and what will work to alter their behavior. Remember that it is a ***change in attitude*** that we are looking for so if your chosen punishment is not effective, then change to what works, be creative. Always keep in mind that our goal should be the building up of our children and establishing Godly character so that they will govern themselves.

**Consequences**

If our children understand what the consequences of their action will be… it can assist them in making wise decisions when it comes to their behavior and their choices.

1. The consequences should be laid out in advance and clearly explained (Biblical Model).
2. The punishment should fit the crime (effective).
3. If there is no change in attitude then there has been no change of heart.
4. Discipline should be focused on breaking the child’s will rather than their spirit.(defiance)
5. Be careful not to exasperating your child (Discouragement)
6. Always follow up with fellowship. (Physical touch & Words of encouragement).
7. Be an Encourager (let them know that you believe in them)Look for opportunities to encourage your kids, recognize that our children need encouragement learn to recognize the gifts and abilities that God has given them.
8. Above all be patient**.**
9. Avoid being overly critical or “historical”, nagging our children can lead to discouragement and leave them feeling that they cannot live up to our expectations. God’s mercies are new every morning.Colossians 3:21
10. Be consistent in discipline of your children and avoid favoritism, each child has strengths and weaknesses (Sibling rivalry).
11. Recognize that correcting our children’s behavior will build their character. James 1:2-4

**The Result of Godly parenting**

While every family is different, applying a biblical model in raising our children will have many benefits. God not only desires that we have peace in our hearts but in our homes and families as well. The example that we set as Fathers will have a lasting impact for generations. If we are grounded in the truth of God’s word and commit to praying over the family that God has entrusted to us He will help us in our weaknesses and our struggles. No one can lead your family or encourage them like you can. With God’s help these will be some of the benefits that you will experience.

1. Peace - In our homes and in our families
2. Respect - You will obtain not only the respect of your children (and possibly you wife).
3. Deeper and more meaningful relationships.
4. Children obey out of “Honor” rather than duty or fear.
5. Our children choose to follow Christ.

 **The Wrap-up**

1. **Discipline begins with us** (a right relationship with God).
2. **Commit to Loving your wife** (strengthen the relationship which is a 100% partnership).
3. **Reassess my relationships** (Ask God, my wife and my children for forgiveness for any failures or short comings).
4. **Apply biblical principles** in the raising of my children. (It’s not too late).
5. **Recognize the Gift** our children are a gift from God, their spiritual life as well as their physical well-being is my responsibility.
6. **Pray** without ceasing and be specific.
7. **Study** (Daily seek Gods wisdom in matters regarding my family).

**Food for thought**

 We have an awesome opportunity to teaching our children and help them to grow deeper in their knowledge of God and our universe. The relationship that we maintain with our children will be an anchor for their lives and a tether that will hold them even in the darkness of the world and the uncertainty of adolescence.

One of our goals as a father should be to help our children to be confident in our love for them, knowing that in spite of any mistakes they will make along the way that we will never leave them our forsake them.

Disciplining our children provides an opportunity for them to grow and reconcile the relationship when they have failed to live up to Gods standard. God sets the example for us through His word. He is merciful to us as sinners and desires to restore us to a “Right relationship” through His son Jesus Christ. It is good for your children to be challenged as they enter adulthood. We will not always be there to walk with them through the challenges and hardships that they will face. Rather God has given us “for a time” young minds and hearts to mold and direct. Recognize that our children are gift from God and they possess many wonderful qualities but also a natural desire to go their own way. Guide them in the path of righteousness for His name sake and Pray that they will glorify God not only with their words but with their lives.

**Godly Discipline**

**Questions:**

1. What style of discipline best describes you?
* Passive
* Aggressive
* Indifferent
1. How will knowing your child’s love language affect your relationship with them? (What is your love language)?
* Quality time.
* Acts of service.
* Physical touch.
* Words of affirmation (Encouragement).
* Gifts.
1. How much time do you spend watching TV?
2. As the spiritual leader in your home, how much time do you spend studying the bible with your family?
3. If you could improve in one area this coming week with your children in regards to discipline what would it be?

**Reference Verses**

**Husbands:**

 **Colossians 3:19** Husbands love your wives and never treat them harshly. NLT

**1 Peter 3:7** you husbands in the same way live with *your wives* in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered. NLT

**1 Peter 3:1** (Wives) in the same way, you wives must accept the authority of your husbands. Then, even if some refuse to obey the Good News, your godly lives will speak to them without any words. They will be won over. NLT

**1 John 2:3-6** and we can be sure that we know him if we obey his commandments. 4If someone claims, “I know God,” but doesn’t obey God’s commandments, that person is a liar and is not living in the truth. 5But those who obey God’s word truly show how completely they love him. That is how we know we are living in him. 6Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Jesus did.

**Colossians 3:12-17** since God chose you to be the holy people he loves; you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. 13Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. 14Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. 15And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful. NLT

**Mat 19:4-6** “Haven’t you read the Scriptures?” Jesus replied. “They record that from the beginning ‘God made them male and female” 5and he said, “‘This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one. 6*Since they are no longer two but one*, let no one split apart what God has joined together.” NLT

**Genesis 2:18** Then the Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.” NLT

**Genesis 2:23** “At last!” the man exclaimed this one is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! She will be called ‘woman, because she was taken from ‘man.” NLT

**Correction**

**Hebrew’s 12:1-13** therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. 2We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God’s throne. 3Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; then you won’t become weary and give up. 4After all, you have not yet given your lives in your struggle against sin.

5And have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children?He said,

“My child, don’t make light of the Lord’s discipline,
    and don’t give up when he corrects you.
6For the Lord disciplines those he loves,
    and he punishes each one he accepts as his child.”

7As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father? 8If God doesn’t discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children at all. 9Since we respected our earthly fathers who disciplined us, shouldn’t we submit even more to the discipline of the Father of our spirits, and live forever?

10For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God’s discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness. 11No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it’s painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.

12So take a new grip with your tired hands and strengthen your weak knees. 13Mark out a straight path for your feet so that those who are weak and lame will not fall but become strong. NLT

**Proverbs 23:13, 14**do not withhold correction from a child, for *if* you beat him with a rod, he will not die.
14You shall beat him with a rod, and deliver his soul from hell. NKJV

**Proverbs 22:15** A youngster’s heart is filled with foolishness,
    but physical discipline will drive it far away. NLT

**Proverbs 22:6** direct your children onto the right path,
    and when they are older, they will not leave it. NLT

**Proverbs 19:18**Discipline your children while there is hope.
    Otherwise you will ruin their lives. NLT

**Proverbs 13:24** He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly. NKJV

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

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

**Psalms 111:10** The fear of the Lord *is* the beginning of wisdom;
A good understanding have all those who do *His commandments.*
His praise endures forever. NJKV

**Ephesians 6:4** fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord. NLT

**Ephesians 6 1:3** Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord for, this is the right thing to do. 2“Honor your father and mother.” This is the first commandment with a promise: 3if you honor your father and mother, “things will go well for you, and you will have a long life on the earth.” NLT

**Hebrews 12:5, 6** have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children? He said, “My child, don’t make light of the Lord’s discipline, and don’t give up when he corrects you.6For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child.” NLT

**Hebrews 12:9** 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? ESV

**Hebrews 12:11** No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it’s painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way. NLT

**Hebrews 12:6** For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child.” NLT

**James 1:2-4** my brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. NKJV **(**Suffering and trials shape us and build character, if we exercise patience it will lead to maturity).

**Romans 6:12-14** Do not let sin control the way you live;do not give in to sinful desires. 13Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God. 14Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God’s grace. NLT

**Deut. 6:7, 8** you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ESV

**Deuteronomy 22:18-21** “Suppose a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father or mother, even though they discipline him. 19In such a case, the father and mother must take the son to the elders as they hold court at the town gate. 20The parents must say to the elders, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious and refuses to obey. He is a glutton and a drunkard.’ 21Then all the men of his town must stone him to death. In this way, you will purge this evil from among you, and all Israel will hear about it and be afraid. ESV

**James 1:2-**As father correcting our kids behavior is not as important as shaping their “Heart”. If our children our brought up in the way that they should go… and they are taught biblical principles by which to live their lives…there is no guarantee that they will continue to walk in obedience to God and live by faith… If we fail to correct them or model our faith by teaching them to fear God and practice biblical discipline the chance that they will do it on their own is slim.

**Luke 18:27** what is impossible with man is possible with God.

**Eph 4:26, 27** “don’t sin by letting **anger** control you.” Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry, for **anger** gives a foothold to the devil. NLT

**2 Timothy 1:7** For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. NLT

**Job 5:17** “But consider the joy of those corrected by God! Do not despise the discipline of the Almighty when you sin. NLT

**Deuteronomy 8:5** just as a parent disciplines a child, the Lord your God disciplines you for your own good. NLT

**Proverbs 10:17** People who accept discipline are on the pathway to life, but those who ignore correction will go astray. NLT

**Isiah 30:1** “What sorrow awaits my rebellious children,” says the Lord. “You make plans that are contrary to mine. You make alliances not directed by my Spirit, thus piling up your sins. NLT

**Proverbs 7:7** the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

**Psalms 51:10** create in me a clean heart, O God and renew a loyal spirit within me.Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and make me willing to obey you.
13Then I will teach your ways to rebels (sinners), and they will return to you.  NLT

**Colossians 3:21** Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. ESV