

Biblical Principles Of Parenting – Discipline (Part 2)

I don't know about you, but the impact of Easter has stayed with me this year; Maybe more than any other; I've just continued to think and dwell on it Especially so, b/c of the response to the gospel; 46 people made a first time decision for Christ, and 111 *recommitted* their lives to Christ

If you're one of them, we praise God for you, and we're praying for you Praying that you bear fruit in *keeping* with your repentance, and grow in your love for the Lord – your devotion, your passion So Easter continues to linger, and that's a good thing

I also want you to know how proud I am of our staff; And hope you are too They put an immense amount of work into the services last week, including Journey to the Cross; And did so with a passion and excellence as unto the Lord Super thankful for that, and super thankful for them

➤ That said, we're in a series on parenting based on **Prov 22:6** – *Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it* That's our mandate, our marching orders – train them up; Raise your kids according to the truths of God's Word, for a life and lineage built to last

And we left off in Heb 12, with Principle #9 (**Template**) So as you turn there, let's do a quick review

Principle #1 – Seek the Lord yourself

That might not be what you normally think, but that's where it starts

Principle #2 – Love your spouse

The positives can't be overstated

Principle #3 – Be the parent

Out with your *kids* calling the shots, and in with *you* doing it

Principle #4 – Teach your kids the gospel

How are they to hear without someone preaching? (Rom 10:14b); And who better to do it than you?

Principle #5 – Tell them how you were saved

Principle #6 – Teach your kids the Word

The *whole* counsel of God

Principle #7 – Help them to think (Prov 16:20)

To smell the battle and ask good questions

Principle #8 – Show them how to live (Prov 4:10-11)

Don't just tell them how to live, show them; *Model* a godly life

And then, last time, we covered Part 1 of . . .

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

Don't fail to bring consequences to bear for the purpose of righteousness Just like God does with us

[5] *And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?*

“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 [our earthly fathers] 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.*

We found 5 **reasons** in this passage alone, to discipline our kids

It's what God does (6); *It's the norm in good parenting* (v7b); *It conveys love* (8); *It teaches respect* (9a); And *it yields righteousness* (11)

And then we identified 1 more from Gen 18 – *It guards against permissive parenting* 6 reasons we must not fail to discipline

➤ Beyond that, we looked at some Proverbs

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

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

And **Prov 22:15** – *Folly [or sin] is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.*

Clearly, discipline is a part of parenting

➤ And the 1st guardrail to keep it out of the ditch, is to do it well; Don't fail to discipline . .

• **But do it well**

As in lovingly, consistently, clearly, calmly, and appropriately; We covered all of those Appropriate for the offense; Appropriate for the child – depending on whether they're strong-willed or compliant

And appropriate for their age – spanking them until they're 6-7, and withholding privileges after that

Don't fail to discipline, but do it well; That was Part 1

➤ Part 2 then, and the 2nd guardrail, is this . . .

• **Do it for the right reasons**

Don't fail to discipline, but do it well, and do it for the right reasons

Which is really important, b/c you can discipline perfectly well, and still get it wrong Primarily by doing it for the wrong *reasons*; The wrong motives

Like not wanting to be embarrassed in public or among your friends; So you punish *more* for the sake of your reputation, and *less* for the sake of your child; Not good Or maybe you punish to make sure your kid knows who's in charge; “This is my house and my world, and by golly you're never going to forget it” It's called authoritarian parenting, and it's not only the *opposite* of permissive parenting, but just as bad

Or maybe you discipline your kids to bolster your insecurity; Domineering over them in order to feel more powerful; Or *controlling*; Or *in* control

Whatever the case, it's not good; Discipline in the *right* way for the *wrong* reasons, is no better than discipline the *wrong* way for the *right* reasons; No better So it's important to know what those right reasons are, and *get* them right

The first of which is . . .

○ **To correct disobedience (Eph 6:1)**

Discipline to correct disobedience; To change something they're doing that you told them not to; To modify a way they're acting, that's contrary to what you've taught
The 1st reason to discipline, is to make your kids stop what's wrong, and start what's right

Eph 6:1 says – *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.*

IOW do what they say in all godliness and holiness, *in the Lord*, b/c it's the *right* thing to do; And the *wrong* thing, as a parent, is to let them disobey
As long as your kids are under your roof or dependent on your support, they need to obey your word, your guidance

Which means, correction is in order when they don't; When they don't obey*****

Sometimes that correction could be brought about through *physical* punishment, sometimes with a *verbal* reprimand, and other times by withholding privileges
But *always* for the purpose of correction
Always for the purpose of getting them back on the road; Back on the straight and narrow; Back to a place of o-bedience

IOW your discipline should *never* be punitive alone – punishment for the sake of punishment; Punishment b/c that's what they deserve

Rather, it should be punishment for the purpose of *correction*; Punishment to change their behavior; That's the first right reason – discipline to correct disobedience

2nd, discipline . . .

○ **To address rebellion**

Not childishness; Not innocent behavior that results in spilled milk; Not accidents

But rebellion; Defiance; Acting contrary to their God-given conscience

Discipline to address that; To drive that out

Which takes us right back to Prov 22:15 – *Folly [sin, rebellion] is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.*

➤ When Anna was 4, she thought it would be fun to take our new puppy outside, and take it down the slide; Not just go down the slide *with* it, but push it down all by itself
So she did; I think it weighed all of about 4 pounds at that point; And the next thing we knew it was limping around with a broken leg; B/c it fell *off* the slide

And while it didn't make us happy, we didn't punish her; B/c it wasn't rebellious

Childish naiveté, yes; But not defiance

She didn't know, or have the ability to anticipate, that the dog couldn't handle such a thing; And we hadn't *told* her not to do such things; It never crossed our mind
So we withheld punishment

Not that it wasn't a teaching moment; “Sweetie, you can't do that; Just like you can't carry him on your bike, or drop him from the top of the stairs, or hold him under water . . .

Or put him in the oven”☺

The point being, it was a teaching moment, not an occasion for discipline

She wasn't rebellious, or disobedient, or acting contrary to her conscience (**Summ**)

Don't *fail* to discipline, but make sure you do it for the right *reasons*

And then last . . .

• **And focus on the heart (Prov 4:23)**

That's the 3rd guardrail when it comes to discipline

Do it well, do it for the right reasons, and focus on their heart

The very thing God does, A concept that's all over the Bible

Like **Dt 28:47** – *Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joyfulness and gladness of heart . . . you shall serve your enemies*; The heart is key

Referring to the core of who you are; The essence of your being

Or how about **Dt 29:19** – *Beware lest there be among you a root bearing poisonous and bitter fruit, one who, when he hears the words of this sworn covenant [the promises of God], blesses himself in his heart, saying, 'I shall be safe, though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart.'*

A messed up heart is not only bad for the *person*, but the community in which they live; Including your family; It makes for a root bearing poisonous and bitter fruit

➤ And then of course there's **Prov 4:23** – *Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.*

We are directed, and affected, by the orientation of our heart

What we say and do is *determined* by our heart, and what we say and do is a *reflection* of our heart (Lk 6:45); It's true of adults, and it's true of kids*****

And if you fail to focus on it – you'll not only fail to *discipline*, you'll fail to *parent*

You have to focus on their heart; You have to discern their heart

Otherwise you'll forever be dealing with *effects* instead of causes; Outcomes instead of origins; Behaviors instead of motives

In which case you'll produce a good moralist and a bad disciple

If you correct behaviors without addressing their heart, you'll raise someone who's good for *goodness* sake, but not good for God's sake

Someone who's good when people are looking, but bad when they're not

Someone who's good if there's a reward, but bad if there isn't

➤ I love the story Tedd Tripp tells in this respect

It's found in his book *Shepherding A Child's Heart* (62), and it's about a family who used a system of rewards to encourage good behavior

Each time one of their kids did something good, they put their name on a piece of paper and put it in jar

If they brushed their teeth without being told, their name went in the jar

If they helped with the dishes, or cleaned their room, or shared their toys – their name went in the jar; Each time

If however, they did something wrong, one of their slips of paper came out of the jar

And at the end of the week, a name was drawn; And the winning child got a present
Encouraging them to behave, and get their name in the jar as many times as possible, so
as to increase their chances of being chosen; Pretty good, right?

Except that it's all behavior, and no heart; All effects, and no motives
And it taught their kids to be good only when it was profitable; Only when they would
get something out of it; Only when mom or dad was *looking*
Only when it would *benefit* them; Short of that there was no *reason* to behave
So instead of raising God-fearing kids who lived for an audience of one, they raised
self-centered kids who lived for themselves; And carried it right on into adulthood

➤ If you're going to fulfill your responsibility as a parent to train up your children in the
way they should go, you have to focus on the attitude *behind* their behavior . . .
More than the behavior itself; Even if it's good behavior

Your child could be crossing their T's and dotting their I's perfectly, and have a perfectly
rotten heart of stone
Or, they could be indulging in sin left and right, but absolutely *miserable* b/c of their
heart for the Lord

And your failure to see it, your failure to *discern* their heart, will result in either a *lack* of
discipline when they need it most, or an abundance when they need it least
Enabling them when they need to be *stopped*, or demoralizing them when they need to
be *encouraged*

➤ Our girls will tell you that they could get away with *murder* if their hearts were soft
If they were honest and *open* about their sin, truly repentant, there was grace upon grace
Not that *consequences* were always withheld, but they were minimal

On the other hand, if their hearts were hard, or they were hiding something, or had a bad
attitude – it was ugly; Just flat-out ugly; And rightfully so

I honestly didn't care what they did, if they were repentant and broken
But if they tried to justify or diminish their sin, no matter how trivial or minor, it was
bad news (**Summary**)
Lock the doors and clear your calendar, b/c we're going to have a come to Jesus
moment

Don't fail to discipline – but do it well, do it for the right reasons, and by all means, focus
on the heart

Pray – Lord, help us in this; Keep these principles ever before us; And give us the insight
and strength to make changes where needed
We give now of our tithes, with a joyful and willing heart, for all that you're doing