

Raising Godly Children-"Discipline"

We are continuing our parenting series on Raising Godly Children this morning. Before we begin, I remember when Katie and I were 1st pregnant, actually Katie was pregnant, I wasn't. But when we got the news that we were having a baby, I remember the 9 months leading up to the actual birth process. I remember Katie had a book called *What to Expect When You Are Expecting*, and she read all about what was going to happen when she went into labor. Then she had the great idea that it would be good for me if we both went to classes that went through what was going to happen during the actual birth process, so I went to the birthing classes as a lot of you guys did. For what seemed like an eternity, this nurse told me everything I could ever want to know about birth. We were told exactly what was going to happen, what to look for, how many seconds were between everything, when I needed to get the car ready and go to the hospital. We watched videos of other women going into labor, which I don't recommend to anyone. But I knew everything there was to know about what was going to happen when Katie went into labor. So when it came time, the pains came, Katie went into labor, I knew exactly what to do. Katie went into the hospital and everything went pretty much according to plan. The nurse was right, everything happened just as she said and here comes Crider. We have this baby, and I'm holding Crider in my arms, my family was there, we're in the hospital for a couple of days, and we hold him for a few minutes, Crider begins to cry, we call the nurse, the nurse takes him and we're just having the best time ever! It's great having kids and then, I never will forget that moment where we cleaned out the room, our bags were packed, everything was neat, we had Crider's car seat out there, we had Crider and we're holding him, and then this nurse comes in and I'm expecting like this long-drawn out process of her now teaching me what to do with this baby. She comes in and says well, Cunningham's you're now ready to go so if you'll sign this paper, you're set to go. I'm signing and I'm thinking, hold on, like what do I do now? Where's the "after" birth class? Where's the "how to take care of a newborn" class

because I have no idea what to do with this newborn baby? I remember walking out of the hospital thinking what in the world am I supposed to do with this new baby? I have no idea how to raise this kid, I have no idea how to feed this kid, and I have no idea what to do when he cries! I think for most of us we are very prepared for the birth but then we might not have been as prepared for what to do after the baby actually comes into the world. I can remember feeling overwhelmed and perhaps some of you parents are feeling that overwhelming feeling of, man we have the great privilege of raising kids!

I remember in a parenting class by Tim Henson, one of the parents was just very overwhelmed and thought this task is just too much at times. I remember Tim Henson said, "Yeah, parenting is a lot like driving down the interstate at 90 MPH, ripping the steering column out and throwing the steering wheel out the window". That is what parenting is like a lot of the times and I think you can all agree that there have been times in all of our parenting lives that that's what parenting seems like. But I want you to know there's good news. God has great instruction when it comes to raising godly children.

So before I begin, I want to make sure and let you all know that I am not a parenting expert. I have a 2 ½ year old, I have a 6 month old, I don't have 4 boys in their 20's that I can say look here, here's how I did it, it worked, I'm not a parenting expert so this morning I'm standing on the word of God. I'm not an expert but God does have a lot to say about parenting. I want to make you aware that I'm not the expert, I'm standing on the word of God and I'm also standing on the example of my parents. I think I had 2 of the best parents in the whole world so I'm leaning a lot from them, also other godly men and godly women who have gone before me and who I've learned about parenting. So with that said I'm not a parenting expert, but I do drive a mini-van, which means I am in the trenches with you. It means I care deeply about the subject because with a 2 ½ year old and a 6 month old, I want to make sure I parent God's way

so that I raise not only good kids, I don't just want good kids, I want godly kids.

Not only am I in the trenches on that end, but I'm also in the trenches on the other end because as a shepherd of almost 200 teens, I'm helping assist parents as they raise some 200 teenagers. So on one end I care deeply about parents when it comes to small children, and on the other end I care deeply about parents when it comes to teenagers, so I care deeply about the topic this morning. So I think our goal for parenting it's got to be not just good kids, but true godly kids. So let's look at God's Word and see what God has to say about parenting.

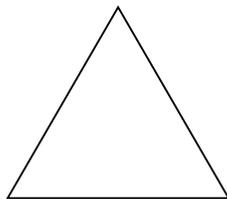
Before we begin, I want to show you a diagram that my professor showed me, before we get there I just want to go ahead and introduce you to our theme verse. Ephesians chapter 6 says this, "Fathers do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord". So the 1st thing we're looking at is fathers do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord; it's going to be our foundational verse for how we do parenting. So fathers, let me go ahead and say this today, Happy Father's Day to all of you dads out there, thank you so much for what you are doing! Let me just say a side note that has to do a lot with parenting, here's one thing I've learned as a father. For me as a dad, what that means is that I'm a pastor of my own home. As a father I am a pastor of my home and here's what that means. I lovingly lead my wife and I lovingly teach my kids, that's part of my role as a father. So if you're a father this morning that is God's role for you if you have a wife and you have kids and you're a father that's what God wants you to do, to raise your kids in the way of the Lord, to lovingly lead your wife, so that's part of what we are as dads. We are shepherds, we are pastors of our own homes, so that's what I want us to do as dads this morning is to really own that, to really think through how can we do that well. So here's what it says, dads as pastors in our own homes, moms and dads we want to raise our kids in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. And 1st Paul says fathers, don't provoke your kids to

anger, so what he's saying is don't be harsh with them, don't provoke them, it's not you being boss over them and lording your authority over them so that you're commanding them everything they need to do. But instead it's raising them, it's nurturing them in the way of the Lord and that is through discipline and instruction, so we see it's raising our kids in the Lord. That's what we want to do, we want to instruct them in the way of the Lord and the method for doing that is through discipline and instruction. It's got to be "both" "and", it can't just be instruction, it can't just be discipline, it's got to be both. Both of those working in harmony together are how we raise our kids in the way of the Lord.

Now before we look at discipline and before we look at instruction, we're going to look at both of those separately, I want to now share with you a diagram that my professor shared with me in a family ministry class at Southern Baptist Seminary, and here is the diagram.

Parents Authority

Later Years-Tightened Authority



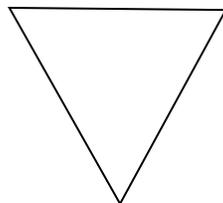
Early Years-Relaxed Authority

It is a triangle and what he says is this is the tendency for most of our parenting efforts; the triangle represents your authority. Here's what he says, he says what often happens with parents is in the early years at the bottom of the triangle we're relaxed on authority and we're relaxed on discipline. In other words, in the early years we give them a lot of choices, we let them get away with a lot of things, and we're not really commanding that they obey our word. We let disobedience sort of run rampant because it's sort of cute. When you're out in the parking lot and you say, hey son I need you to come and get in the van and he runs the

other way, and you chase him and everybody's laughing and it's kind of cute. What happens is when they get to be 13 and 14, all of a sudden that rebellion, that disobedience, it's not funny anymore. All of a sudden it's scary, and what happens is when we're very relaxed in our authority in the beginning years, as they grow into teenagers and we don't have that ability to pick them up and put them where we want them to go and we don't have their heart and we don't have that authority when they obey our voice when we say it, there's big time trouble. And what happens is that God's design for the teenage years is to be the time when you can really loosen up on your authority, you can give them choices, you can give them freedom because you've trained them in the way they should go, and they can make real decisions because at 18 you want to launch them out into the world as a fully functioning as an adult who's following after Jesus Christ. But what happens is a lot of times when we don't exercise authority at the beginning when they get to the teen years, all of that rebellion that's been in their heart from day 1 that we haven't dealt with, all of the sudden it's big issues, it's big sins, so what we do as parents is we buckle down the authority, we buckle down the discipline and that is when they really need freedom. That's when they need maturity, that's when they need choices that they can exercise and this is when it often leads to teen rebellion, it's when teenagers are ready to some make decisions but we can't let them because we haven't trained them at an early age to listen to our voice. So what I want to introduce to you is what my professor introduced to me and that is the upside down triangle.

Parents Authority

Later Years-Relaxed Authority



Early Years-Tightened Authority

If we can get this, this helped me so much in the way I think about raising my boys. It's at the early years at the very beginning, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, all the way up until those teenage years, it's exercising the right amount of authority, where they learn to obey your voice, they learn to become dependent on dad, they learn to become dependent on mom. They learn, obedience, they learn to follow you at what you say. So it's having the proper amount of discipline, the proper amount of authority at the beginning, and then as they grow and mature, then you can start giving them choices, you can start letting them exercise freedom because now they are maturing, they're growing because you're showing them what is right, you're instilling in them wisdom in the early years and hopefully those teenage years are going to be a beautiful time of great opportunity where you can start launching those arrows out, start launching in those situations where they can make those decisions on their own. That's what we want to do as parents, we want to see that we have the proper authority at the bottom when they're young and then let them out as they grow.

Paul Tripp in his book about parenting teenagers says that the age you parent teenagers is between 2 and 4. That's when you're really parenting your teenagers. Right now we are parenting Crider in his teen years when he's 2 1/2. If we don't get it right now, we're going to have a lot of trouble in the teen years so if you have small children know that you are parenting even your teenagers at this small age. So exercise the right amount of authority so that they begin to obey your word. So that's the verse that we're looking at, so here's the focus, we're looking at between 0-12 this morning, and here's what our focus is going to be and I got this from *Shepherding a Child's Heart* by Ted Tripp, it's a book I highly recommend to you guys, it's the one that Abbey gave to all of you new parents this time when we had the baby dedication, this is a great resource.

But here's what he says, "Between 0 and 5, your focus is on authority" so as a parent if you're parenting a kid between 0 and 5 and really this starts around 2 because you really can't begin a lot of authority over a 6 month old, but that age it's going to be focused on authority. Here's what you want to make sure your child understands, you're in control, you're in authority, and they must obey your voice. That's what you want to get with your 2 year old, with your 3 year old, with your 4 year old, with your 5 year old, daddy's in control, you listen to what daddy says, you obey mommy and daddy. Now the tendency during this age is to put them in control, to give them all kinds of choices, and to simply to act as an advisor. It's to ask them all kinds of questions, what do you want to eat, what do you want to wear, where do you want to go, what do you want to do, how do you feel? It's always putting them in the position of they're the center, they're in control, they make the decisions, you simply advise them to make the right decisions. I think the desire there is for us to raise independent kids; we want our kids to know how to make decisions, be independent. I want to share something that again Tim Henson shared with us in the class, he says you never want independent kids, you always want dependent and the goal of parenting is to transfer their dependence on you to their dependence on God. That's the goal of parenting, you never want them to be independent, you never want them to follow their own inclinations and desires, you want them to first follow your word because you know better and then secondly you want them to follow God's Word because He knows better. You want them to always be dependent on someone and it starts with being dependent on you and then being dependent on God. But what happens is we often put them in control, we accommodate sin, we ignore misbehavior, selfishness, we think oh they're just immature. The problem is selfishness is not immaturity, kids don't grow out of being selfish, and selfishness just looks differently in the teenage years and then in the adult years. So they're not going to grow out of these things, they have to be trained out of these things. So during this stage, in the authority stage here is the deal, parents we must win the small battles. It's so hard winning the small battles because it's so much

easier when you say son, come and change your diaper or come and get your diaper changed and they run in the other room. It's way easier just to go in the other room, pick them up because you can do that, bring them down and then set them down and then change their diaper while they're kicking and screaming, their legs are kicking, it's easy, you can just deal with it. But that's not winning the battle, it is through discipline and instruction that you get your child to learn that when daddy says something, I need to come, I need to obey, I need to do what he says because he knows what 's best for me. So we've got to win these small battles because I'm telling you that battle you just had between your son or your daughter, when they're 16 it's going to look a whole lot different. It's going to be a whole lot more scary because you can't just grab them and put them where you want them to be, you have to have their heart and you have to have that respect and that authority that you've instilled in them when they were very young.

So we've got to win the battles, we've got to focus on authority and then when they get to be 5-12, and these ages aren't exact, you can always focus on character, you can always focus on authority but really when they're that 5-12 ages you can really start talking about character. Here's what our focus has to be, it has to be on the heart. You see as parents we tend to focus on behavior during those times. Okay, my son's doing this so I've got to try to get him to do *this*, so he's not doing *this*. Or my daughter's doing *this* so I'm going to focus on *that* behavior so she stops doing *that*. But here's what we have to do as parents, we have to look at the behavior. Little Johnny just hit little Susie, ok we don't need to just get Johnny to stop hitting, we need to trace back the hitting to what's at the heart issue. What's going on in his heart? Does he have anger in his heart, does he have selfishness in his heart, and does he have pride in his heart? So you want to chase the behavior back to the root, back to the heart.

If you remember Jesus in Luke chapter 6, He says that from the heart comes either goodness or evil, so misbehavior is the result of evil in the heart, good behavior is a result of goodness in the heart so it's got to be a

heart issue. If you remember in Proverbs chapter 4 it says it's from the heart the whole life flows from, it's the wellspring of life, so we have to parent back to the heart. During this stage you want to focus on the question why. You want to ask them why a lot when they do things wrong. So when Johnny hits Susie, you want to ask why did you hit Susie but you know what you are probably going to get? "I don't know." Have you parents ever heard that? "I don't know I just did it". And you know what? They're probably being absolutely honest with you, they really don't know! They don't have the categories yet to know that I was angry in my heart because I love me more than her, so that when she took the toy, because my heart was angry because I love me more than her, that's why I hit her. They don't have those categories; they're not processing that, so what you need to do as a parent is to get Johnny to start thinking through that. "Well Johnny let's talk about this, why did you feel this way? Well because she took my toy. What about taking the toy made you angry? Well because I wanted it. Ok, well there's a problem. See Jesus tells us to love others like ourselves, and we should care not for just your good but for her good too. You see Johnny there's a problem in here (pointing to heart), you don't love others like the Bible wants you to others." Then we start dealing with real heart issues, we get to the root of the problem and as you do this your kids are going to start understanding why they do the things they do, and it's a result of heart issues.

Do you know what's really cool at this age? You can really start to talk about the gospel a lot. Do you know what Johnny's going to find out? He's always loves himself over everyone else and you can explain to him, do you know why, because you're a sinner and you're in need of the Grace of Jesus Christ. It's only Jesus that can fix that core problem so in discipline and instruction in these early ages you can really begin to speak about the gospel. "Yeah, Daddy struggles with that too, Mommy struggles with that too, and you know what, we all need Jesus, we all need His Grace because you're never going to fully do what God wants you to unless you've got Jesus working through you, that's why He died for you, that's the good

news of the gospel." So the gospel becomes very real to them because they can see their own sin, not just in behavior but in it's who they are, it's what they do, so the focus in that 5-12 is in character. It's also, you're still in control, you still have authority, so hopefully if you're a parent that's in one of these categories, and it's given you a one word of focus. 0-5, I'm focusing on authority, they need to obey what I say when I say it, and then in 5-12 we need to start dealing with character issues, we need to start thinking about what is going on in the heart that's causing you to do the things you're doing. So we raise our kids in the way of the Lord through discipline and instruction.

I want to treat discipline first and then I want us to look at instruction. So here is discipline and I want us to think about the need for discipline. Why do we need to discipline our kids? The need for discipline is sin, our kids are not born neutral, but they're born sinners. We know that from the Bible, they're bent toward sin, folly and rebellion. Here's what Proverbs say in chapter 22 verse 15, "folly is bound up in the heart of a child but the rod of discipline drives it far from him". So the need of discipline, there's foolishness bound up in the heart of your child but the rod of discipline is going to drive it far away. You see most cultural for methods for raising kids, it assumes kids are neutral. Kids are not bent towards evil, there not bent towards good, and what they need is the right information and the right motivation to make the right choices. So if you'll give them the right information, if you'll motivate them, if you'll give them the right reasons as to why to make the right choices, they're going to make the right choices. But here's what we learn from the Bible, bad choices are not a result from lack of information, it's from their bent toward sin and foolishness. That's why they do the things, not because they don't know what's right but because they don't want to do what's right because foolishness is bound up in their heart. What the Bible says it's the rod of discipline that's going to drive it far from them. So we have the need of discipline is sin. Then we see the purpose of discipline and that is wisdom. Discipline actually gives our kids great wisdom, here's what Proverbs says, "the rod and reproof

give wisdom, but a child left to himself gives shame to his mother". So it's actually the rod and reproof that gives wisdom to our kids. Here God says it is discipline that is giving wisdom and here's what you need to know about discipline, discipline is correction it's not punishment. Discipline is all about correcting it's not because you did *this*, now you deserve *this*. It is because you did *this*, you need wisdom and correction because you're out of the path of blessing and this correction and wisdom is going to get you back in the path of blessing. You see, God disciplines us as believers, and His discipline is not punishment, it's not judgment, we've been judged in Christ as innocent and guiltless by the blood of Christ. So there is no punishment for our sins, but God's discipline, He disciplines us for our correction so discipline is actually Grace, not punishment.

I want us to look at a very helpful passage that helps us to understand biblical discipline, it is Hebrews chapter 12 and here's what it says. "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. For the Lord disciplines the one He loves and chastises every son whom He receives. 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 have 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." Here we see that discipline is Grace, discipline is about momentary pain that produces a peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. God disciplines us as sons and we should be diligent to discipline our sons as well because what discipline does is it produces a great harvest a great fruit. So we see that the purpose of discipline is wisdom and it's Grace and

we see the motivation for discipline is love. You see when we talk about discipline some parents will say "but I love Johnny too much to discipline him. Man I just love Susie too much to discipline her. I just couldn't discipline because I love them too much", but here's what the bible says Proverbs 13:24, "Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him". You see here's what God says, that discipline is love, and non-discipline is actually hate. That's what this verse says, so it's important that we do discipline because discipline is good for our kids. You see non-discipline is easy for us because it keeps us from having to do things that we don't feel comfortable with maybe some of the time, but it is very harmful for our kids. Catering to their misbehavior, ignoring bad behavior, it's good and easy for us but it's bad and harmful for our kids. So with the motivation of love, we need to discipline our kids.

Then the last one, the method of discipline is the rod. Now this is not the only method of discipline but I think from the biblical perspective it is the most significant one and that is the rod. Here are some verses in Proverbs, Proverbs 23:13 and 14. "Do not withhold discipline from a child", so what is discipline? "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." So don't withhold discipline, what is discipline? Discipline in this context is the rod. All of the verses we've seen, it's the rod and here's the thing with the rod, it's temporary, momentary pain, but it's not going to kill them, it's not going to injure them, it's not going to hurt them, it's actually going to save their soul from Sheol. So it's important that we know the biblical method which is the rod.

Now at this point I think the bible is very clear, the need for discipline is great, we must discipline, the purpose is wisdom, the motivation is love, the method is the rod, but what I want to speak on next is not in your bible. This is not biblical authority, but it was shared with me in my family ministry class by Dr. Randy Stinson at Southern Theological Seminary, so this was his opinion on how to biblically give the rod to your kid, how to biblically give what he called a "gospel spanking", ok? So this is not in the

Bible, this is what I think is a great way to do it, this is what Dr. Randy Stinson thinks is a great way to do it, if you've got another method that is great, this is not biblical authority but I know it is extremely helpful for me and Katie. If you're a young parent maybe you're thinking, I don't know how to do this, I don't know how this thing works, I know it's important, I know it's supposed to give wisdom, but I don't really know what I'm supposed to do. Here is the *how-to* to do but before we get into the actual act of, we're going to look at some things you need to do before.

Here is a "gospel spanking", you need to determine *When, What, and Where*. The *When* is you need to decide when you're going to spank. In other words, when is the time your kid needs a spanking, a "gospel spanking"? What I would suggest is number 1 is for blatant disobedience. Blatant disobedience I think constitutes a spanking. This is when you say Johnny, you need to come over here, and they look at you with that look and then they run the other way, which is disobedience. They get a spanking, you bring them back, and you say Johnny I need you to come here. If they run the other way, you spank again, bring them back, and I promise you the spanking will not be worth the disobedience. They will learn to obey your voice and to honor you. So it's when they're openly disobedient with you, you tell them to do something that they do the opposite. Also when they break known rules. If you've got a known rule in your house, "Johnny don't hit your brothers and sisters" and Johnny hits a brother or sister, then that is something he knows he shouldn't have done, so that constitutes a spanking in my opinion. The 2nd thing is delayed disobedience. This is when you ask them to do something and they don't do it right away, they do it 10 minutes or 30 minutes later or they just look at you and act like they don't hear you and they keep playing, that's delayed disobedience. The 3rd thing is disgusted disobedience. They're obeying you but they're fussing, they're screaming, they're yelling, they're getting their diaper changed but they're kicking and screaming and they get all 4's going. That would be disgusted disobedience, what they're saying is, I'm doing what you're telling me to do but I'm not liking it at all

and in here (heart), I'm rebelling like crazy. That is disgusted disobedience; they need to obey with a joyful heart. So I think all 3 of those things constitute a spanking.

In the "gospel spanking" that we are going to talk about, I think you as a husband and a wife need to go through that, you need to have that conversation. What I would say to you is don't spank for non-moral issues. Sometimes kids are going to be an inconvenience to you, that's just because they're kids. For instance, the other day, Crider had the sippy cup on top of the cabinet, I go to pour some milk, I haven't got the lid on yet, he grabs it, pulls it off and milk goes everywhere! Immediately, I'm angry a little bit, it's early in the morning, then I think no, this is not a spanking event, Crider did nothing wrong here. So don't spank just for inconvenience. If you walk into the room and they've built some crazy slide out of everything in the room and they're having a good time and you walk in and you're like man, you all deserve spankings! Well they didn't do anything wrong there, they were just being very creative, now if you tell them not to build slides out of the beds that's another story, but don't just spank for inconvenience on your behalf. So when should we do it? You guys need to decide that.

The next is *What?* What are you going to use, just as a note to you, is something that should be very lightweight and flimsy that's going to produce just a little bit of a sting and that's going to produce absolutely no lasting damage. A wooden spoon, a paint stirrer, something that's going to produce a light sting but there's no chance of leaving any bruising and there's no chance of harming them whatsoever. So you need to decide what is going to be our rod, what are we going to use?

Then lastly, *Where?* I would suggest to you that you pick a location that's very private because I think this is a very private act between a parent and a child. There shouldn't be spectators, there's no reason for there to be a crowd, this is not to humiliate them, and this is to give them wisdom.

Maybe the bathroom would be a great place to do this so that you can be alone and have this moment with your child.

So that's what you do before, now let's say an offense has happened, what does this look like? How do you give a "gospel spanking", as my professor calls it? This would be my suggestion, number 1 you ask. So they're in the private location you want to 1st ask them, "son, why are you getting a spanking"? Now if they're too young to say, you can tell them, but when they're older you can ask them why. Here's what you want, you want to give them a category, you want them to know what they did, to say, "Daddy, I disobeyed you, Daddy I hit", or Daddy I did *this*. You want them to be able to say why they are getting a spanking.

Then next, you want to tell them how many spankings they're getting. You say "son, you're going to get 2 spankings". The reason I think you should tell them is because you want them to know that you're not in anger, you're not just angry and provoking spankings on them, you're under control, this is with love and grace, you are completely in control. You want them to know that ok? If there's anger in your heart before you do this, go outside and pray before you ever enter the room because you want this to be done very gracefully, very gently, you want there to be no anger in your face when you're giving them this spanking. So tell them how many spankings they're getting, I would suggest 2 to 3. Then next, have them to get into some sort of position that shows they're submitting to you, they're not running around, jumping everywhere and you're trying to catch them, they are submitting to discipline and then the 4th one.

You obviously spank, and here's the goal, short, temporary pain that causes them to cry maybe a few seconds. You don't want to hurt them, you just want to produce that sting that causes a reaction, remember it's a temporary pain that produces a fruit of righteousness. Then after this, this is when it gets very good. I really mean this, this is when it's beautiful, here's what you do at this point. You have to have the apology, and here's what you say to the child. "Son or daughter, now what do you say to

Daddy"? You want your son or daughter to say "Daddy, I'm sorry for..." and then list what they did or say what they did. You're giving them a category of how to deal with sin, because they're going to sin all throughout their lives, and you want them to apologize. "Daddy I am sorry for" and then fill in the blank.

Next comes another important part, forgiveness. So they've just said "Daddy I'm sorry for" blank and you say "ok daughter, now what do you ask for"? They say, "Daddy will you forgive me"? Huge! Hugely important to give them a category of sin, "I'm sorry, Daddy will you forgive me" and when they say that guess what happens? There is absolute forgiveness, there is full restoration, and here comes the beautiful bear hug! This is a great moment! You've corrected them, you've imparted wisdom to them, you've dealt with their sin, they've confessed, they've apologized, they've asked for forgiveness, and you've forgiven them! Just as a side note, don't say it's ok, if they say "Dad do you forgive me", don't say "yeah it's ok son". It's not ok! Disobedience is not ok, but you forgive them because Christ in God has forgiven you. So what they need to know is I forgive you and then there's the big hug and right at the end I would say a quick prayer. Come in with a big bear hug and just pray, "Father help Johnny not to sin, amen". It's just a quick battle prayer, nothing more than 2 or 3 seconds, just give them a category. I need to pray about this, I need to go to God about this, and then the last step. If anybody was offended, if brother was hit, they need to go to them and say, "Brother I'm sorry will you forgive me", and then you need to have brother to say "yes, I forgive you".

So it's giving them categories to deal with sin. At this point after this it's completely over. That offense, it's not talked about, it's not brought up anymore. It's dealt with; it is joy time in the home. It is happiness now, they're restored, it is play time, it is joyful, when they walk out of that room they have a smile on their face, they're ready to rock-n-roll. I was reading a parenting book and they gave an illustration of a dad who went to the private place and imparted wisdom to his son and then came back

out and the son was smiling and the mom and dad were happy. But the grandma was disgusted and she said I can't believe that kid's smiling! He should be really upset about what he just did, he should mull over this for a long time, what you did didn't really work. The point is not to cause them to mull over this, or be depressed, or cause division from the family. It is we've dealt with it, it's over; now let's rejoicing in the gospel. Let's rejoice in the good news and what's really cool is when you're kids get older you can even add in the gospel to this. Because when you have that conversation you can say, "Johnny do you know what? Daddy still struggles with sin too, but you know what? Jesus Christ died on the cross for us, He gives us Grace, He gives us help so that we can not sin, and so what I want to say to you is go to the throne of His Grace because that's where you truly can learn, only by His Grace, to obey like God wants you to obey". So you can bring in the gospel here. So this is discipline when it comes to what we've talked about we've got to have discipline and instruction.

I know that some of you may be thinking at this point now Kory if I really do this; I'm going to be giving little Johnny wisdom all day long! I'm saying some days it is! But here's the deal, if you will look at that triangle properly and know that at this point I need to really have his attention and authority and respect, I need to continually impart wisdom, and as you are very consistent with the way you discipline, then they will start to learn that when mommy and daddy say something, I should perk up. I should listen because God wants me to obey and it is important that I obey. And what you are going to see is in your homes, your kids are going to start to really respect and obey you. What we're going to see is that the walks later on in their life especially in the later child years and teenage years, you're going to have a teenage son or daughter who listens to you, who respects you. As they grow, the discipline is going to get fewer and far between but right now if you have a small child in this age group, 0-12, we've got to win the small battles now. We have to be constantly disciplining our kids and also instructing them because God has placed us as the primary people in our

kid's life to raise them in the way of the Lord. Parents are primary, the church we help, we assist, but we're secondary and if you look at Proverbs, the Proverbs parent is constantly putting over their kids this garland of wisdom, this garland of knowledge so that they constantly hear about how great God is.