

"Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth." Psalm 127:4

Session 9: Embracing Biblical Methods: The Discipline Process

I. Physical discipline is out of style in our culture

- A. Often rejected by people who have been physically abused by their parents
 - i. These kids never knew when they were going to be disciplined
 - ii. The discipline was often done capriciously and in anger
 - iii. Their response was, "I will never do this to my kids"
 - 1. This response is appropriate - you must never do that to your kids!
 - 2. Don't throw out what the Scriptures say because you were abused

B. The Bible is clear about spanking children

- C. Don't be taken captive by hollow and deceptive philosophy about physical discipline that denies the Bible

II. The Biblical basis for physical discipline

- A. Proverbs 13:24 — "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him."
- B. Proverbs 19:18 — "Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death."
- C. Proverbs 22:15 — "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him."
- D. In the Bible a fool, one who does folly, says there is no God. This is serious.
- E. Proverbs 23:13-14 — "Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod he will not die. Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death."
- F. The child is on a trajectory headed for death if he is not challenged.
- G. Proverbs 29:15, 17 — "The rod of correction imparts wisdom, but a child left to himself disgraces his mother.... Discipline your son and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul."
- H. The meaning of these passages is clear; they are not hard to understand. There is an amazing amount of effort against doing what God has commanded.

III. The "How of Spanking:" A plan for how to do physical discipline biblically

- A. Take your child to a private place—discipline is not a spectator sport
- B. Tell the child specifically what he has done or failed to do—the child knows what is coming and why
- C. Secure an acknowledgement from the child—it is so important for the child to acknowledge the discipline process
- D. **Remind the child of your objective**
 - i. To restore the child to the circle of blessing
 - ii. Child has placed himself in danger because of not submitting to mom and dad

- E. Tell the child how many swats he is going to receive
 - i. You can deal with your children according to their different personalities, etc.
 - ii. Let them know you are in control and your actions flow out of love
- F. Remove his drawers
 - i. Layers of clothing can keep the spanking from being effective
 - ii. Important reminder: If your child is old enough to care for his own hygiene needs then leave his underpants on

G. Restoration

- i. When you are done, tell him how much you love him.
- ii. **If the child will not be restored, here are two things to check.**
 - 1. Was my spirit wrong while disciplining? If so, ask for forgiveness
 - 2. The child may still be outside the circle of blessing
- iii. Pray with the child and for him.

IV. Common questions:

A. When do you spank?

- i. Many things (especially with little children) require correction but not discipline
- ii. **Discipline for defiance**

- B. What do you use? — Something that stings without bruising.
- C. When is the child old enough? — When the child is old enough to *understand* your words and not obey
- D. What if I am too mad? — Never discipline when you are mad or angry
- E. What if we are not at home? — If you are not at home, don't discipline your kids
- F. What if he did not hear me? — Would he have heard you if you had whispered "would you like ice cream?"
- G. When is he too old? — Spanking is most effective with little children
- H. What if it doesn't work? — The primary reason spanking does not work is because parents discipline in anger
- I. Can I use time out instead? — No (note the clarifications Tedd makes)
- J. If I listen to you, all I will ever do is spank my kids! — If spanking is done biblically this will not be the case
- K. What if it is too late?
 - i. It is never too late—but you must train and instruct first
 - ii. It is not wise to implement a physical discipline process with older kids who were not disciplined as young children

Take Home Principle: We would spank our children for the 3D's: Disrespect, Disobedience and Dishonesty. Determine your threshold in advance, not when you are angry or frustrated.

Family Life Spanking Guidelines:

- *Assure the child of your love
- *Parents should spank when in control-not in anger
- *When appropriate, explain "why"
- *The will of the child should be broken, not his spirit
- *Always done in private
- *It should be memorable (painful) for the child
- *Should be done promptly
- *Your child's age is important
- *Verbal affirmation, physical love, and prayer should always accompany spanking
- *Child should never be surprised when they get a spanking

Homework: Read chapter 11 in "Shepherding a Child's Heart". Try to have a date night to discuss the following questions:

1. How do we feel about physical discipline for our children? Is our position consistent with scripture?
2. What changes should we consider in how we administer physical discipline?
3. Are we in agreement as to when physical discipline is appropriate with our children? Are we consistent as to when and how we administer discipline?
4. How can we help each other be more consistent and more Biblical in our discipline?
5. Do we properly emphasize restoration following discipline?

Resources: familylifetoday.com

"Mean Mom's Guide to raising great kids", by Joanne Craft

"Instructing a child's heart" by Margie and Tedd Tripp

"Right from the start" by Barbara and Dennis Rainey

"Don't make me count to three" by Ginger Plowman