

# Family Matters



*Ephesians 6:1-4 "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise; that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, instead, bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."*

**Discipline:** (systematic training)("children" from birth to 18+)

- Parents first duty is to teach their children to obey them and transfer that same obedience to God. Children are not naturally obedient. Obedience is something children must learn. ("For the Lord's sake" Colossians 3:20,23,24)

**OT Discipline:** There were serious consequences for disobedient children. Deuteronomy 21:18-21 "...a stubborn and rebellious son who does not obey his father and mother and will not listen to them when they discipline him... all the men of his town shall stone him to death..." (Exodus 21:15; Leviticus 20:9)

**NT Warning And Christ's Example:**

2 Timothy 3:1-5 "There will be terrible times in the last days...people will be... disobedient to parents..."

Luke 2:51,52 "Then he (Jesus) went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them... and Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man."

Hebrews 5:8 "Although he (Jesus) was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and once made perfect he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him."

**OT Bad Example Of Discipline:** 1 Samuel 2:12,17,22-25; 3:1,13  
Eli, Hophni, Phinehas

"Eli's sons were wicked men; they had no regard for the LORD."  
v.2:12 "They were treating the LORD's offering with contempt."  
v.2:17 "Eli heard about everything his sons were doing (immorality). He said, 'why do you do such things... it is not a good report.' His sons however did not listen to their father's rebuke." v.2:22-25 "I (the LORD) told him that I would judge his family forever because of the sin he knew about ...and he failed to restrain them." v. 3:13

George MacDonald, The Lost Princess, p. 133

*"As for you," she said, "you are sufficiently punished by the work of your own hands. Instead of making your daughter obey you, you left her to be a slave to herself. You coaxed when you ought to have compelled; you praised when you ought to have been silent; you embraced when you ought to have punished; you threatened when you ought to have inflicted. And there she stands, the full-grown result of your foolishness! She is your crime and your punishment. Take her home with you and live hour after hour with the pale-hearted disgrace you call your daughter. The worm at her heart has begun to teach her what she is. When life is no longer endurable, come to me."*

In order to have a garden of weeds it is not necessary to do anything but let it go (neglect). The lack of discipline has a destructive impact on the future course of a child's life.

Question: How are we as parents failing to discipline our children?

### Areas We As Parents Fail In Disciplining Our Kids:

1. Little or no discipline (bribery/negotiation)(example of child at park)
2. Inconsistent (harsh then lax)(confusing)
3. Lack follow through (our word means nothing/empty threats)
4. Timing of consequences is delayed  
Ecclesiastes 8:11 "When the sentence for a crime is not quickly carried out, the hearts of the people are filled with schemes to do wrong."
5. Consequences don't hurt or cost child very little (punishment should fit the crime/pain is a deterrent – no pain no gain)
6. Left only to one partner/not unified in discipline process/one partner undermines other. (Child may pit one partner against the other)
7. Done in anger which leads to embitterment rather than change of heart  
Psalms 38:1; 39:3 "O LORD, do not rebuke me in your anger or discipline me in your wrath." My heart grew hot within me, and as I meditated, the fire burned; then I spoke with my tongue..."

### The Lies Of Modern Psychology: (un-Biblical views)

- Children are innocent or basically good at heart  
Proverbs 22:15 "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him."  
Psalms 51:5 "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me."  
Psalms 58:3 "Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward and speak lies." (Romans 5:12,19)

- Rebellion/disobedience is “normal” childhood behavior/just a phase  
1 Samuel 15:22,23 “Obedience is better than sacrifice... rebellion is like the sin of witchcraft, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry.”
- Rationalism - use reason & negotiation to get desired behavior
- Phobia of physical abuse (fear spanking will scar/push kids away)
- Misunderstanding of love  
Proverbs 13:24 “He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him.”

## Biblical Discipline:

- **Loving controlled discipline**  
Proverbs 3:11,12 “My son, do not despise the Lord’s discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.”
- **Painful discipline** (not acts of abuse or cruel violence)  
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.”  
Limitations of “time outs” or withdrawing/restricted privileges:  
Importance of privacy:  
Each child is unique: (give an appropriate reward for conduct)
- **Goal: The result of discipline** (or lack thereof)  
Proverbs 19:18 “Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death.”  
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.” (10:17; 15:32)  
Hebrews 12:7,10,11 “... For what son is not disciplined by his father? We have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it... Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”  
Proverbs 22:6 “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.” (early training secures lifelong habits)  
Exodus 20:12 “Honor your father and your mother, that your

days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you." (Blessing and prosperity is promised to those who obey it.)

- \* There is a direct connection between how a child is brought up and how they turn out.
- \* Kids need boundaries/structure = safe/security
- \* Loving discipline is the balance between 2 extremes: love w/o discipline and discipline w/o love
- \* The early years are foundational for what is to come Galatians 6:7 "A man reaps what he sows..."
- \* Parents must diligently to do what is right, even when it is difficult, even when tired - God will bless our obedience.

### **Parental expectations of children should include:**

1. Listen to parents request (eye contact)  
Eph. 6:1 "obey" means to listen intently and conform to a command (hear and heed)
2. Verbally respect parents authority ("Yes, mom!/yes dad!")
3. Timely obedience (delayed obedience is disobedience)
4. Proper attitude when corrected (body language)  
"Honor" is the hearts disposition behind obedience.  
External compliance that veils an insubordinate heart is not God-honoring (angry, reluctant, defiant obedience).

### **Children Should:**

- Honor their parents with their words  
Exodus 21:17; Leviticus 20:9; Proverbs 20:20; 30:11
- Show respect to parents in every way  
Leviticus 19:3; Proverbs 30:17 (facial expressions)  
Question: How are children disrespectful to parents?
- Follow/heed their counsel  
Proverbs 23:22-25; Deuteronomy 27:16; Ezekiel 22:7  
Proverbs 12:1 "Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid."  
Proverbs 15:5 "A fool spurns his father's discipline..."

Sociologists from Harvard University found that there were four primary factors necessary to prevent delinquency in children. (1) the father's firm, fair, and consistent discipline; (2) the mother's supervision and companionship during the day; (3) the parents demonstrating affection for each other and for the children; and (4) the family's spending time together in activities where all participated. (John Mac Arthur)

**What Is Your Ultimate Goal In Disciplining Your Children?**  
(to train up regenerated obedient children)